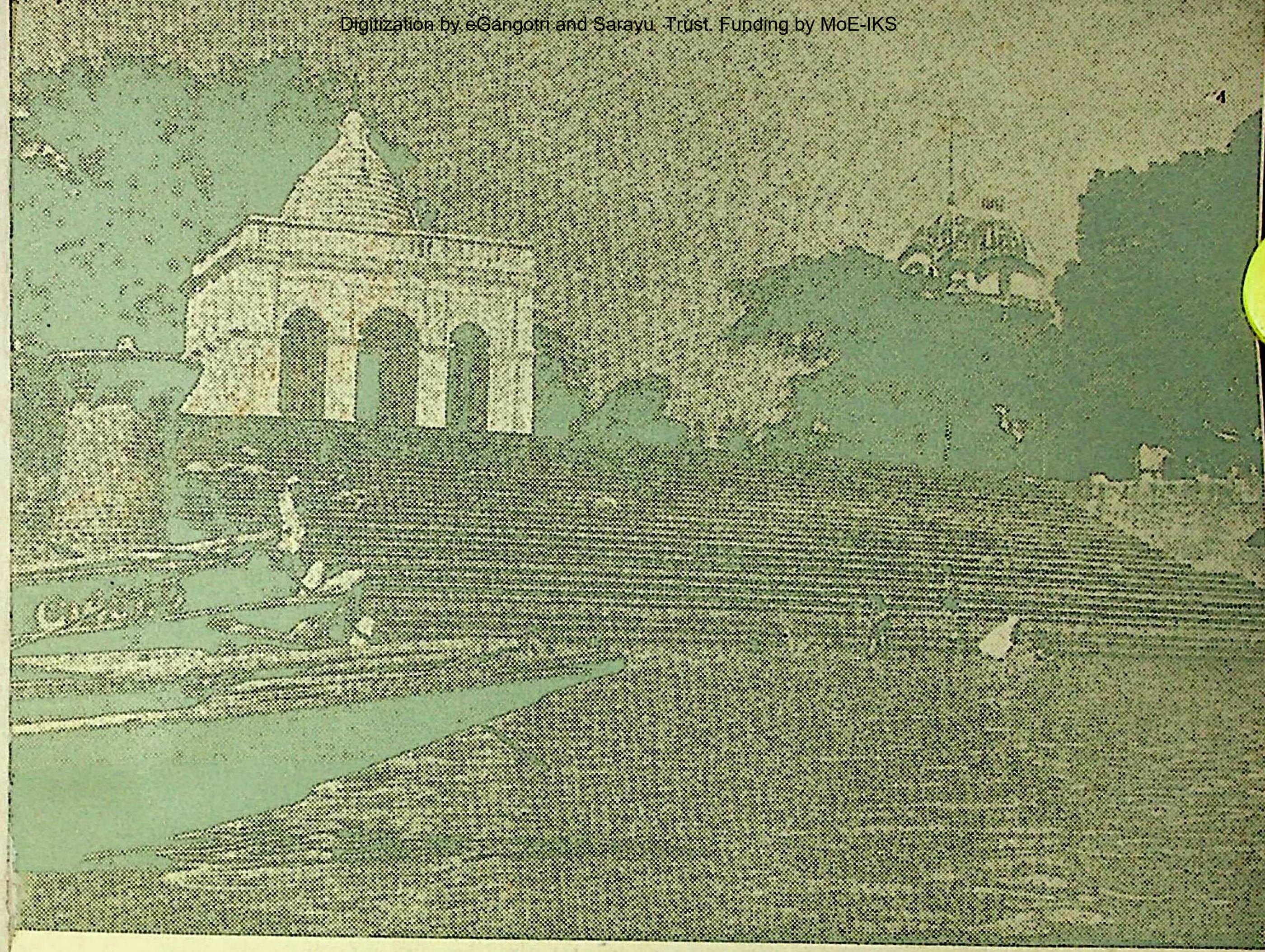

OL. LXVIII

JANUARY 1963

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA

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ESSAYS IN PHILOSOPHY

By

FIFTY-TWO SCHOLARS—EASTERN AND WESTERN

Presented to
Dr. T. M. P. MAHADEVAN
Head of the Dept. of Philosophy,
University of Madras.
ON HIS FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY

◆

Releaseed for Publication by
Dr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR
(Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University)

At a Special Function held at
THE MADRAS UNIVERSITY CENTENARY BUILDING

Under the Presidentship of
Dr. A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIAR
(Vice-Chancellor, Madras University)

on 26th November, 1962

The fifty-two essays which make up this volume in honour of Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan are not a simple apology for Oriental wisdom and the hegemony of spirit. An entire cultural spectrum, with many fine lines and shades discernible in it, has been flashed by the distinguished contributors to the volume. Scholars of different nationalities, of different scientific. ethical and religious persuasions, working in vastly different technical fields of enquiry have joined hands in this work. Professor Mahadevan could not have been honoured in a more fitting fashion.

Royal Octavo **550 pages** **Cloth Bound** **Rs. 25/-**

Publishers :
Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras - 17, India

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA

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Editor: SWAMI GAMBHIRANANDA Joint Editor: SWAMI CHIDATMANANDA

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVIII JANUARY 1963 No. 1

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

* * *

TO THE NATIVITY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(After a Bengali song by the late Sri Girish Chandra Ghosh)

A radiant star of luminous shine,
Illumining the heavens serene,
Enters the orb of the earth;
To a lady of rare piety
Is born a jewel among men,
A *sannyāsin* young, perfect, and self-absorbed.

As the sun stirs up the thick cloud-storms
To hide its lustrous rays behind,
So hath he, with his Māyā's aid,
Assumed the human form,
And this seeming cover of forgetfulness
Is but a sport.

Wonderful his adoration of the Guru's feet!
Wonderful his self-surrender to him!
A tumultuous river meeting a vast, calm lake;
And the mighty current of compassion
That flows out of it
Washes the earth of its haplessness.

The humanity's mind is cleared of its dross,
And it finds the Peace sublime.

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Swami Vijnananandaji Maharaj was one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and became the fourth President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in 1937. He had established and organized the Ramakrishna Math at Allahabad, and was in charge of it from 1910 to 1938, when he entered *mahāsamādhi.* The following are the extracts from the Swami's discourses at different times during the early period of the year 1920 in the Allahabad monastery.

* * *

'God is all-pervading and all-powerful. There is nothing that cannot be granted by Him. Whatever people want from Him, He supplies like a servant, as it were. Therefore, one should not ask for anything from Him, but remain satisfied with whatever He is pleased to give. If you ask the gods for anything, they give you a gift which is like a double-edged sword. Real welfare lies in using things properly; wrong use of things brings misfortune.'

* * *

'One sign of great souls is that whatever they say proves to be true. Anything that comes out of their mouths is sure to happen. Another mark is that, even if you beat them right and left, they will suffer it uncomplainingly—that is the way of a *sādhu.* Don't you remember the incident of Bhṛgu? To find out whether Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the greatest among the gods, he gave a resounding kick on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's chest. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa behaved as if nothing had happened, and by His affectionate welcome, converted Bhṛgu into an obedient slave. It is very difficult, indeed, to become a *sādhu.* One has to have complete control over his body, mind, and speech, and be quiet, composed, and grave in demeanour. From Buddha's life and discourses, we find that action follows thought; as you think, so you act. As loving thoughts help in expanding the consciousness, so do anger, jealousy, and envy lead to its contraction.

'I have seen many *sādhus,* but only in the Master did I see this speciality that he never spoke disparagingly about anybody.'

* * *

'One day, at Dakshineshwar, the Master gave me a book in English and wanted me to read and explain it to him. It was said there that one should speak the truth, one should not covet others' goods, and one should control one's passions. The Master was very pleased to hear it and expressed his happiness like a child. I have still a vivid recollection of his joy on that day. I think the reason for his expression of delight in that manner was that it is just through those three things that one can attain God. Any talk on God would lead him into a trance.'

* * *

'Unless one can restrain one's passions, it is impossible to get anywhere near God. One's duty is to lead an honest and pious life, and above all, to conduct oneself as an humble servant of God. Help the afflicted, but without hoping for return. If you remain steadfast in your faith, entertaining no prejudice against other faiths, and hold fast to the truth in any and all circumstances, then the Divine Mother will come and guide you. For that, however, you have to exercise self-restraint and undergo mental training. The Hindus know perfectly well what this training means—to be pure in body, to be non-covetous, and not to accept gifts from anyone. Your body is built through the food you take, and if that is not clean and pure, how can you expect mental perfection? If there is something wrong at the very root, the result, too, is bound to be likewise.

'Accepting gifts from others makes one feel very small. Your own affairs are sufficiently exacting and getting involved in other people's business is bound to be an additional burden. Thus, even if you have to raise money from the public, its expenditure should be exactly for the purpose for which it was collected. The Master always warned us against spending money on items for which it was not definitely earmarked.

'Making compromises with evil leads only to self-deceit. You can satisfy your lower self, but your higher self will cry out one day for a satisfactory explanation. And failure to provide that will lead to certain retribution.'

* * *

'The object of life is Self-realization. You should be satisfied with whatever you can secure for keeping the body fit, and then, go on working selflessly for God. There is a Hindi couplet which says that jewels, elephants, and houses, indeed, all wealth is just valueless compared to contentment. But once you are a householder, it is very difficult to follow these ideals. Even I myself had my own temptations to overcome. It is all so difficult; you cannot have contentment so long as you are subject to worldly desires. Once they disappear you are free.'

* * *

'There is a Bengali song which runs like this: "You have brought me up and taken care of me. O Mother, I only know you are there, but I have never seen you." It is an idea which very much appeals to me. The Mother is looking after us all the time, but does not appear before us. We cannot say it is a fault on Her part. She is always with us, only we ourselves refuse to see Her. How can we see Her, if we are slaves to our senses and passions? It is these senses and passions which, for their own sport, have kept us in the dark. The only way out is to think of Her night and day, to surrender ourselves to Her unreservedly, with the determination to free ourselves from passions, and to effect a complete suppression of them. It is, of course, a slow process, and who knows how many lives will pass before we attain the goal?

'We should hold fast to faith and never lose it. With all the strength of this faith, we should, in all simplicity, patiently pray to the Mother to make us pure in heart, and She will certainly grant our prayer. It is purity of heart that is required. Everyone will achieve truth in accordance with his temperament when there is purity of heart. Once that is attained, we shall get what we desire. Let us make our minds pure, the rest will be easy; and we shall attain spiritual happiness, comparable to nothing else in life. Our worldly pleasures are but a speck of dust, when weighed against that great mountain of joy. No earthly pleasures can have any attraction for us when we have once tasted of that happiness. When we have control over our passions, we shall succeed; we shall ourselves then feel that we are advancing towards God.'

* * *

'After death, worldly desires continue in an intangible form. Death only destroys the body, but the senses, the mind and intelligence—all remain in a subtle form. In that subtle body, sensuous perceptions are still more acute. Even in the causal state, the "mind" exists in the form of "seed". In the supra-mental state only, one attains the plenitude of knowledge. It is not enough, therefore, to try for physical development only; what is wanted is all-round advancement—physical, mental, and spiritual.

'Everything in the world is a compound of many things; it is only God who is pure and simple. The Vedānta characterizes time, space, and causation as Illusion or Māyā. That Māyā is the "Mother", the Primordial Energy. To know this Māyā is to conquer it, and one who has done so is a man of real strength. One who knows the uses of time and lives it properly in all respects will gain victory over time, i.e. over life and death.

'Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna: "One who is able to discover inaction in action and action in inaction is the really wise man with true vision. Therefore, you have to be a soldier as well as a *yogin.*" The world is not a place where one can afford to be inactive and lazy. When one can work without any thought of self, then only, can one realize the joy of rest. "Work like a hero", Śrī Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna, "it ill becomes you to be overcome with doubt and diffidence. Shake off this weakness; be brave and get ready for the battle." The Western nations make good use of their time, and therein lies the secret of their strength in this world. If we, too, make proper use of our opportunities, we can achieve great things. God is behind us always; let us remember Him in everything we do. Every action leads to a certain result; we cannot afford to forget that.

'In the sphere in which we happen to be, we want to dismiss everything as Māyā, although we have never sought to understand what Māyā really is. The real *sādhu* is he who has gone beyond time, space, and causation, after having known them. When we know what time, space, and causation constitute, we come to know what lies beyond them, too. But this knowledge is rather very difficult to attain—knowledge means realization. We are the children of the Mother; so, what have we got to fear? Let us hold fast to the truth and pray to Her, and She will surely confer on us Her blessings.'

* * *

Hearing that a cat had spilt the milk in the kitchen, the Swami said: 'I have told Beni (the servant of the Allahabad Math) so often to keep the milk under that box and cover it well, but he always forgets it. And I can hardly blame him; it is not possible for a single person to look after so many things.' Then, laughingly, he added: 'And, if he had that much of intelligence and mental concentration, surely, he would not work as a domestic servant.' What a beautiful way of expressing annoyance!

* * *

Swami Vijnananandaji never divulged anything about his own spiritual visions. Questions about them would make him dismiss the subject with light-hearted banter, as if curiosity about it was irrelevant. But, in those days, these visions came to him so profusely that little bits of them would come out in conversation, even somewhat involuntarily. He once said: 'I don't have dreams nowadays, but see Him actually in person, so I just quietly lie down. And, indeed, who can reveal Him? He reveals Himself. When the sun rises, one does not need to be told about it; by its own light the sun reveals itself.

'The other day I saw myself spread across from one end of the horizon to the other. Call it a dream or anything else. But I felt a great joy, and a recollection of it gives me a thrill even now.'

* * *

Allahabad Math, February 8, 1920

The Swami was sitting at the Muthiganj Math, Allahabad, surrounded by a few devotees. The discussion was about Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* at Vrindaban. A devotee said: 'The attitude of the *gopīs* seems rather queer and difficult to understand.' The Swami said: 'No, my friend, it is not that. It is very difficult, indeed, to understand these things. These cowherds of Vrindaban, both men and women, were not ordinary people. Each one of them could create a separate universe. To understand their motivations, one's self-consciousness has to be completely eliminated. We have to be completely selfless to dominate our base desires and believe in the all-pervasiveness of God.

'You see, God is always inside us and also outside, telling us to shed our fears and worries. "You can't run away from me" says He. "You want to play about a little. Well, go on playing. But I am ever inside you; seek and ye shall find. The moment you attain complete mastery over your passions, you will get Me within you, effulgent and blissful." '

On another occasion. Maharajji said: 'Invoke the blessing of the Mother—morning, noon, and night. Pray to her: "O Mother, give us that insight which enables one to realize Divinity." Make your prayer as you find it in the Gāyatrī.

'Our Mother is the embodiment of law. If you conduct yourself in accordance with this law, you will gain complete knowledge and understanding, and going against this law will only lead to inevitable disaster, and you will be pulverized into atoms. This law of God acts silently; it is great and all-powerful. This is what Christians call the Holy Ghost and Hindus call Śakti.

'For the sake of devotees, the Mother comes with ten arms, and says: "Shed your fears. You have made Me your sole refuge, and I am, therefore, protecting you with ten arms. Death will be powerless to come anywhere near you. It is for you that I hold a sword." I can tell you, that I have realized it in the very depth of my consciousness and I know from my own experience that I am always under the Mother's sheltering care. In all these fifty-three years, the Mother has never appeared before me in Her alluring form. Indeed, She warns me in time against any approaching danger and surrounds me on all sides. No harm can befall me.'

* * *

'The most remarkable phenomenon is that all men, all animals desire to live for ever. This shows the immortality of all created things. Yes, it is really so. The One that is within us all is without beginning and without end, without birth or death. There is nothing like death there. As you discard an old shirt, so does He discard the body and enters another.

'The mind is man's greatest and only treasure. God has fashioned this mind in such a way that it will always be subservient to you. If the mind were perverse and disobedient by nature, we would not have been responsible for any of our actions; in that case, man would neither be a free agent, nor would he be counted as the acme of creation. You are the complete master of your mind, and you can shape it as you like. When the mind is completely under your control, it will have nothing to exist on, except noble thoughts. Just as we know that pure and wholesome food is necessary for our physical existence—impure and contaminated food will only injure the body—so is it necessary to nourish the mind with noble thoughts and high ideals, refusing to provide it with evil thoughts and bad associations, which are like poison to the mind.

'The man who has lost his character is really dead. Compared to this moral death, death in a physical sense is of little consequence. One who has lost his moral anchorage will suffer for it in many, many lives to come.

'When the mind vibrates in tune with the higher laws, you get a vision of your cherished deity or of gods and goddesses in all their radiance, in the spot between the eyebrows. You are the master of your mind and you have to keep it pure. Your responsibility ends there; the rest is God's business. He is all-knowing and will come to your assistance in every way. He is Providence, the wish-fulfilling tree, who provides everything. The Master used to narrate a beautiful story. A man had heard that God is the greatest of givers, and one gets from Him whatever one wants. So, this man prayed for all sorts of material and worldly possessions, which were granted to him as he went on asking for them. Then he thought: "If a tiger comes here now and devours me, I am done for." No sooner had he thought so, than a tiger came and devoured him. God had fulfilled every desire that arose in his mind. He acts like a valet to provide us with whatever we want. Is He to blame or are we? It is desire that is the root of all evil, and no one else is at fault. That is why a discriminating person says to God: "Your actions are your own. I am not the doer, I am but the instrument."

'What you require is hope, faith, and patience; and gradually, you will reach the goal. You have done the right thing in making the Master your sheet-anchor. He came down to save people. You only pray to him and peace will be yours. Only a prolonged look at him will wash away all the sins and sorrows of your heart. He is all-pervading, he is within you all, and he knows everything. Confide in him, but you must be careful not to go to him with selfish desires. Why should you pray to him for paltry things like worldly riches? You should pray to him that he may make you pure and unselfish, and give you strength to realize the ultimate Truth. If you hold fast to him, you are safe. The mind is full of perversity; and so long as it does not get a severe jolt, it does not properly knock at God's door. It turns to God only when it gets a serious knock.

A MONTH WITH A SIGNIFICANCE

Apart from being the first month of the sixty-eighth year of *Prabuddha Bharata,* this month of January of the year nineteen hundred and sixty-three comes to us with a special significance. In this month, just a hundred years ago, was born Swami Vivekananda, whose world-wide birth centenary celebrations will be inaugurated on the seventeenth day of this month, which, according to the Hindu almanac, is the auspicious birthday of the Swami this year. Swami Vivekananda's advent was not an ordinary event. The divine hand worked for it, and what India and the world have gained by this event is too well known to be explained.

The last century, in which the great Swami appeared, witnessed the end of the medieval age and the advent of the modern. There was a new wave of life all over the world. It was particularly a period of triumph for the West—specially Europe. Europe was no more confined within its geographical boundaries. With the force of its new scientific outlook and the impact of the Industrial Revolution, its immense power sought to engulf the entire face of the earth. Everything was, as it were, in a state of surge. India, also, did not escape its influence. Coming into contact with those strong currents of scientific and materialistic thought, she was almost deluged with those ideas. The age-old convictions of her national life were shaking on their foundations, and it was a question of 'to be or not to be' for her. English education and European civilization, which were introduced in this ancient land during the nineteenth century, had created strong tendencies, leading to denationalization and Anglicization of its entire fabric of indigenous life. Modernization of India was, no doubt, a necessity for resuscitation of the national life of this land, but not in a way it threatened to come. The transitional process was rather fearful.

But everything was not to be taken all lying down. Throughout the entire length and breadth of the country, from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari and from Gujarat to Bengal, there came flashes of rational consciousness, and men sprang up to examine and challenge the onslaught that sought to overwhelm and win over the age-old institutions of the cultural life of the people of India. Various reform movements were started during the time as a historical necessity. But, more or less, they were working with almost apologetic psychology and did not possess the clear insight that was the great need for such movements. The influence of Europe had almost imperceptibly taken so deep roots in the mind of the nineteenth century India that, as the famous French thinker Romain Rolland says, 'almost all the reformers of the last century were Anglomaniacs, and oscillated between the East and the West'. 'Their characters, also, were compounded of the incompatible elements of the East and the West.'

And this was nothing unnatural. History is replete with instances when the might and valour of the conquering nation have held almost complete sway over the mind and thought of the subject peoples. Whenever any novel ideology of life, social or political, nay, even cultural or religious, is held by an overpowering victor, the subject people grasp at that sparkling ideology, without even pausing to consider how far it will suit their cultural instincts, or how far it is conducive to their ultimate well-being. This has, oftener than not, been the unfortunate experience of history, in the life of most of the subject races of the world. India, too, was not very much an exception to this. The influx of the Western culture and social ideologies into the stream of Indian thought created a good deal of unsettlement and confusion, in the normal course of her life and thought process. And, it was in that period of confusion, more confounded by the political supremacy of the West, when the children of this ancient land were lured unwarily into a position of utter helplessness that Swami Vivekananda was ushered into the arena of our national life. He came as a powerful challenge to the crisis of the time. At his clarion call, the soul of India was stirred to its innermost depths and found her lost ground anew. The vital thought forces of the race compressed themselves, as it were, in the single unit of that noble personality who stood before his countrymen with the grace and vigour of grand Indian culture. At the same time, he did not overlook the needs of the modern times. He combined in himself the best that was in the East and the West. In this respect, Swami Vivekananda is not only an Indian of the highest order, but a world citizen at his best. What he did and said was not to save India alone, but to open up the concept of a new life for humanity at large. Sister Nivedita, speaking about the contribution of the Swami to the thought treasure of humanity, truly says: 'The gift that has been here made to the world will remain and bear its fruit in East and West alike. What Hinduism had needed was the organizing and consolidating of its own idea. What the world had needed was a faith that had no fear of truth. Both these are found here.' She further says: 'Nor could any greater proof have been given of the eternal vigour of the Sanātana Dharma, of the fact that India is as great in the present as ever in the past, than this rise of the individual who, at the critical moment, gathers up and voices the communal consciousness.'

II

Swami Vivekananda was, first and foremost, a realized soul. He had experienced the great truths of the Vedānta and had touched the very core of Reality. The essential oneness of the Spirit, manifesting itself variously in different units of existence, was a fact of realization to him. He had achieved it at the feet of his great master Sri Ramakrishna, who appeared on the Indian scene as the 'consummation of two thousand years of the spiritual life of three hundred million people', and as the fulfilment of India's spiritual aspirations. Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda stand out as the symbols of the rediscovery of the soul of India, which had been anaesthetized, as it were, for the time being by an overdose of materialistic dope and sceptic wind that came in the wake of Western impact of the last century. The heart of the nation was restored to its vitality once again and was to bloom forth in the eternal spiritual and moral values for which India has always stood. The experience of oneness in the midst of variety, of unity in the midst of diversity, and the perception of the innate divinity of all souls, which he had received from Sri Ramakrishna, the Swami treasured, and having realized the necessity of scattering these great ideas broadcast to humanity at large, set out to preach them in India and the world outside. His personality, however, was not confined to the sphere of the Spirit alone. His was the conception of a dynamic religion. It comprised all life in its fold and various manifestations of it were only different modes of worship. 'It is in this', Sister Nivedita writes, 'which adds its crowning significance to our master's life. ... If the many and the one be, indeed, the same Reality, then, it is not all modes of worship alone, but equally all modes of work, all modes of struggle, all modes of creation, which are paths of realization. No distinction, henceforth, between sacred and secular. To labour is to pray. To conquer is to renounce. Life itself is religion. To have and to hold is as stern a trust as to quit and to avoid.

'This is the realization which makes Vivekananda the great preacher of *karma*, not as divorced from, but as expressing *jñāna* and *bhakti*. To him, the workshop, the study, the farmyard. and the field are as true and fit scenes for the meeting of God with man, as the cell of the monk or the door of the temple. To him, there is no difference between manliness and faith, between true righteousness and spirituality. All his words, from one point of view, read as a commentary upon this central conviction.' To make people all over the world understand this great truth of the oneness of all existence, to rouse the consciousness of men to realize this unifying truth to live as brothers in faith, and to see that it was not only an imagery of impractical and wishful thinking, was the key-note of the Swami's life and mission.

III

Swami Vivekananda, as he knew the pulse of his motherland, felt in the heart of his hearts that India, with her long tradition of liberal outlook and harmonizing spirit, was the land most suited to give a palpable shape to this theory of Vedānta in practice. Here, he was a patriot among the patriots. The motherland was the reigning queen of his heart, and her he not only loved, but adored also. Sister Nivedita tells us: 'Like some delicately poised bell, thrilled and vibrated by every sound that falls upon it, was his heart to all that concerned her (India). Not a sob was heard within her shores that did not find in him a responsive echo. There was no cry of fear, no tremor of weakness, no shrinking from mortification that he had not known and understood. He was hard on her sins, unsparing of her want of worldly wisdom, but only because he felt these faults to be his own. And none, on the contrary, was ever so possessed by the vision of her greatness.'

India was to him 'the blessed *puṇyabhūmi*, the motherland of philosophy, of spirituality, of ethics, of sweetness, gentleness, and love'. This love for the motherland had made him one with the teeming millions of his brothers. He was a man of the people in this respect. As he was 'the proudest man ever born' to be a son of this great land, none was more concerned than he of her present degradation. The pitiful cry of sunken millions of India made an irresistible appeal to his compassionate heart which beat with each throb of all the hearts that ached, known and unknown. During his extensive sojourn through the length and breadth of India and his contact with all kinds of people at all levels, he was able to know the land through and through. Her greatness, her glory, her strength, her potentiality, her weakness, her failure, her misery, her sorrow, her poverty, her dependence—all had enabled him to live through with her in her glorious past, the miserable present, and the magnificent future. Romain Rolland, in his life of Vivekananda, says: 'He wandered free from plan, caste, home, constantly alone with God. And there was no single hour of his life when he was not brought into contact with the sorrows, the desires, the abuses, the misery, and the feverishness of living men, rich and poor, in town and field; he became one with their lives; the great Book of Life revealed to him what all books in the libraries could not have done—the tragic face of the present day, the cry of the people of India and the world for help, and the heroic duty of the new Oedipus, whose task it was to deliver Thebes from the talons of the Sphinx or to perish with Thebes.' He instinctively, as if impelled by the Lord who resides in every soul, felt in his heart of hearts that a great mission awaited him. A mute appeal rising all around him from the oppressed, yet struggling, soul of India, the tragic contrast between her grand and glorious past and the present miserable degradation, the feeling of an anguish of death and an urge for resurrection, of despair and love of her children devoured his heart. And, at the end of his pilgrimage of this holy land, standing on her last stone at Kanya Kumari, the Swami laid the entire fund of his accumulated spiritual and intellectual powers at the feet of his motherland, for the uplift of her people and for the well-being of humanity at large.

IV

Swami Vivekananda was, indeed, a patriot and a saint in one. Patriotism to him lay in the very identification of one's personality with the joys and sorrows of the fellow beings and in their loving service—service raised to the status of worship. 'Three things', he said, 'are necessary for great achievements. First, feel from the heart, my would-be patriots! Do you feel that the millions and millions of the descendents of gods and sages have become next-door neighbours to brutes? Do you feel that millions have been starving for ages? Do you feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud? Does it make you restless? Has it gone into your blood, coursing through your veins, becoming constant with your heartbeats? Has it made you mad? Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin, and have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies? Have you done that? That is the first step to become a patriot—the very first step. . . . Instead of spending your energies in frothy talk, have you found any way out, any practical solution, some help instead of condemnation, some sweet words to soothe their miseries, to bring them out of this living death? Yet that is not all. Have you got the will to surmount mountain-high obstructions? If the whole world stands against you sword in hand, would you still dare to do what you think right? Have you got that steadfastness? If you have these things, each one of you will work miracles.'

These are the words come out of the very depths of conviction, which realization brings, and the Swami was the very embodiment of what he said. Yet, his sense of patriotism was not narrow or parochial, that does not hesitate to rob others to swell its own coffers. It was in perfect harmony with his deep-seated saintly love for humanity, inasmuch as his genius spoke within him with the redeeming voice of a prophet that, in the regeneration of India, lay the safety of the modern civilization, bereft of spiritual content and the harmonizing sap of life. To him, an India regenerated in her true cultural heritage, seemed the best means of supplying the crying needs of the world. His reading of history revealed to him what India stood for and what India did for the world. 'India's gift to the world is the light spiritual' he said. 'The debt which the world owes to our motherland is immense. Taking country with country, there is not one race on this earth to which the world owes so much. . . . Gifts of political knowledge can be made with the blasts of trumpets and the march of cohorts; gifts of secular knowledge and social knowledge can be made with fire and sword; but spiritual knowledge can only be given in silence, like the dew that falls unseen and unheard, yet bringing into blossom masses of roses. This has been the gift of India to the world again and again.' His conviction was firm that India, though politically subjugated and economically strained, had the potential greatness of her inner life intact, and that, for her own good and for the good of the world, she must rise—shaking off the bondage put around her and casting off the chains that bound her down to a position of subordination. Seventy years back, he, with the vision of a seer, saw his motherland rising out of the seeming mass of decay, 'more glorious than ever she was'. For he sincerely believed that 'for a complete civilization, the world is waiting, waiting for the treasures to come out of India, waiting for the marvellous spiritual inheritance of the race, which, through decades of degradation and misery, the nation has still clutched to her breast; the world is waiting for that treasure'. And with conviction and faith, he called forth: 'Up, up, the long night is passing, the day is approaching, the wave has risen, nothing will be able to resist its tidal fury. Believe, believe, the decree has gone forth, the fiat of the Lord has gone forth—India must rise, ... none can resist her any more; never is she going to sleep any more; no outward powers can hold her back any more; for the infinite giant is rising to her feet.'

V

And what did Swami Vivekananda do to regenerate this India of his dreams? Various assessments of the Swami's work in this respect have already been made and more will be made in time to come. It will be enough to say that he stands as the harbinger of the message of life to the renaissant India of the modern times. The imagination of the Swami embraced in its comprehensive sweep all the major problems of Indian life. Mass education, emancipation of women, economic and social uplift of the people, preservation of the grand cultural heritage of the land, and dissemination of the accumulated spiritual wisdom of the race to one and all, irrespective of race or nationality, engaged the keen attention of this patriot-saint. Circumstanced as he was in those days as the architect of a great organization which was to translate his ideas into action, he kept aloof from politics. But to one who reads between the lines of his utterances, this fact cannot be hidden that he always advocated freedom as the ultimate condition for any real growth, either of an individual or of a nation. But that was to be achieved after preparation and strengthening of character. The freedom movement that deluged the land in 1905 and after drew tremendous inspiration from the Swami's writings—a fact which has been admitted by all students of the history of Indian freedom movement. But the Swami, for valid reasons, wished that first things must come first. He knew that if the right chemicals were put in the right proportions, the correct reaction would take place by itself. The Swami, therefore, sought to reinvigorate the land with the basic strength of character—the national character founded on sound and solid grounds. He realized that, in a land where society had been transformed into a theatre for the devil's dance and the mute millions were rolling in the mud-puddle of crass superstition and crushing poverty, empty political shibboleths could hardly be of any avail, unless the actualities of life were boldly faced and works of social usefulness earnestly undertaken to prepare the ground for political redemption. The status of the common people was to be raised. He, therefore, wanted a band of heroic young men, fired with the zeal of service and strengthened by the spirit of renunciation, who would go throughout the length and breadth of the country and bring the message of hope and courage to the ignorant and fallen masses. In education—imparted in the right way—he saw the great magic power to awaken the people. It would not only be spiritual knowledge, but secular education also, comprising all aspects of human culture. 'The education', he said, 'which does not help the common masses of people to equip themselves for the struggle of life, which does not bring strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion—is it worth the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on one's own legs.' He wanted that women, also, should be encouraged to take their due share in national regeneration and for that, it was necessary that they, too, should be properly educated—spiritually as well as in other things. 'We shall bring to the need of India', he said, 'great fearless women—women worthy to continue the traditions of Saṅghamitrā, Līlā, Ahalyā Bāī, Mīrā Bāī—women fit to be mothers of heroes, because they are pure, selfless, strong with the strength that comes from touching the feet of God.' He believed that such a balanced character of men and women—properly educated and inspired by high ideals—would not only make every household an abode of peace and joy, but would enable the nation to enrich itself with citizens who would help as well the achievement of a nobler destiny in the collective life of humanity.

He was also awake to the necessity of economic welfare of the nation and it was his firm conviction that poverty was at the root of most of the evils. 'The root cause of all the miseries of India', the Swami said, 'is the poverty of the people.' He, time and again, advocated the great necessity of educating the Indian people in the various technical arts and sciences to solve the economic problems of the land and to make them worthy members of a great nation. 'What we should have', he said, 'is what we have not, perhaps, what our forefathers ever had not—that, impelled by the life-vibrations of which, is issuing forth in rapid succession from the great dynamo of Europe the electric flow of that tremendous power, vivifying the whole world. We want that energy, that love of independence, that dexterity in action, that bond of unity of purpose, that thirst for improvement. Checking a little the constant looking back to the past, we want that expansive vision infinitely projected forward.'

But we must not forget that though the Swami was an advocate of the material prosperity of the nation, he was always awake to the national genius of India, which lay in its deep spiritual consciousness. He, therefore, held that religion should always be the bed-rock of Indian national life. If that life current was kept pure and healthy, the whole fabric of the nation's life would go well.

The Swami was also alive to the evils that had crept into the life of the nation and was keen for their eradication. Wrong understanding of religion and perverted conception of right and wrong, artificial bondages of castes and creeds and narrowness of outlook, perpetuation of senseless superstitions and mistaking laziness for spiritual quietude, committing social injustice over the poor and the weak under the garb of false religion, and such other things came for bitter criticism at the Swami's hands. 'A country, the big leaders of which have, for the past two thousand years, been only discussing whether to take food with the right hand or with the left, whether to take water from the right-hand side or the left, if such a country does not go to ruin, what else will?' he would ask.

VI

But, though a patriot of the first magnitude, Swami Vivekananda was not blind to the need of a harmonious blending of the best elements of the East and the West, and as we have already said, he did not fail to see that it would augur well for both. His love for his country did not isolate him from the rest of the world. He saw the inevitable writing of the time on the wall that the world was fast moving towards a synthesis of ideas and ideals, and the life of every race or nation was, as a matter of course, bound to be interlinked with that of the rest of the world. The Orient, he thought, would really be benefited by somewhat greater activity and energy of the West, as the latter would profit by sharing the Eastern introspection and meditative habit. In his opinion, science coupled with Vedānta was the ideal of future humanity. The advancement of science only strengthens, and not undermines, the foundations of philosophy. The two meet at a point where the human being stands as one indivisible entity, and it is this basic unity which science and philosophy seek to find out from two different directions. 'Physically speaking', said Swami Vivekananda, 'you and I, the sun, the moon, and stars are but little wavelets in the one infinite ocean of matter, the *samaṣṭhi*.' The philosophy of Vedānta, he adds, goes a step further and says that, behind this idea of unity of all phenomena, there is a greater truth—which is the one soul—the Reality of one existence, without a second. This principle supplies the rationale for all morals, all ethics, all spirituality. The West wants today this great principle, which, consciously or unconsciously, is forming the basis of the latest political and social plans and aspirations—this idea of one world, this idea of co-existence and all that. As a great seer, Swami Vivekananda visualized the dawn of a new civilization, evolved out of a happy synthesis of Vedānta and science of the East and the West, and here, there would be blended in harmony the various types of cultures, at the same time, there would be adequate scope for their characteristic development and free play. He preached this idea not only for India, but for the world at large, pointing thereby to the bewildered humanity the real path it should follow to build up a richer, a more perfect type of human society, which will not be cut up into small segments of narrow outlooks and selfish interests. 'Let us hope', he declared, 'that the entire human race may some day draw some of its spiritual inspiration from the ancient religion of this land, that the East and the West may then make their full contribution to the perfection of humanity, and the last civilization of the world, like her first, may be a civilization, not of struggle and warfare, but of peace and sympathy, charity and harmonious co-operation to a great end.'

This is the great legacy Swami Vivekananda left with us. Much has been achieved in India, and the world has taken great strides forward during the time since the Swami left us. His vision has been realized to some extent. But much more has yet to be achieved and much more progress has yet to be made. And it is time that we made more earnest efforts to understand the import of Swami Vivekananda's message in fuller measure and actualize his noble ideas in all our actions, and in the different aspects and spheres of our life—individual and collective—for the well-being of India and the world at large. May this first month of the Birth Centenary year of Swami Vivekananda endow us with the effort, the resolution, and the energy to do so.

THE MOTHER-GODDESS IN THE SAPTAŚATĪ

By Professor Batuknath Bhattacharya

An integrated view of life and a way of realization, not parochial but all-embracing, are common features of many Indian cults. They provide an outlook which links up the individual and society, earth and heaven, here and hereafter. They present a spiritual map of our subcontinent, dotted with centres, fostering the special type of inner illumination, with shrines and holy seats of distinctive discipline. Jaina temples and Buddhist *vihāras*, the four *dhāmas* of the Śāṅkara sects, Vaiṣṇava sacred cities, Śaiva pilgrim resorts, Śākta *pīṭhas*, etc. serve as focal centres of stimulus and cohesion. The fifty-two spots, where, according to Paurāṇika tradition, the limbs of the self-immolated Satī, whirled on Śiva's trident, fell disjointed, evidence the pre-eminence of Durgā among the manifestations of Śakti. As Puruṣottama signifies Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Person, so Jaganmātā, the Universal Mother, designates this divine form. The all-India vogue of Her worship is evidenced by sculptured relics of antiquity which, in the South, go back to the sixth or seventh century. Tāntric devotion is said to pertain to four schools—Gauḍa, Kerala, Kāśmīra, and Vilāsa, the first three belonging to the east, middle, and west, respectively, and the last being eclectic and found in all parts. The Āgamas, as the revealed sources, are designated after three zones—Viṣṇukrānta, Rathakrānta, and Aśvakrānta—to the east, south, and west of the Vindhya range, comprising, perhaps, the *terra cognita* of the ancients and extending up to Java and Mahāchīna. Tāntric worship, according to a verse, had its home in Bengal, from which it became fully manifested in Mithilā, and appearing in some places in Maharashtra, it faded away in Gujarat.

If Bengal be the stronghold of Tāntricism, the worship of Durgā as Supreme Mother should, naturally, reach its peak of splendour, as it does, in this eastern region. The litany of seven hundred stanzas—the *Durgā Saptaśatī* or *Caṇḍī*—found in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa,* may not date earlier than the fifth century, but the worship of the Goddess, like many other features of the Indian religious tradition, goes back to a remote Vedic age. In the *Caṇḍī,* the worship of the earthen image is related. The Goddess is hymned twice in the *Mahābhārata,* and again in its *khila* (appendix), and referred to in the *Rāmāyaṇa,* also. In the *Kena Upaniṣad* and in the *Devī-sūkta,* she is exalted as the Supreme Power behind all the forces and agencies of the universe—the aspect which is elaborated in the *Caṇḍī* in several episodes. Historic tradition traces the prevalent worship in Bengal, with the composite imagery, to Raja Danujamardana, a north Bengal chief, and the Mahāyānic phase of Buddhism, with its multiform icons, may have suggested the panel of figures, but the Vedic inspiration as the source is undoubted, as the prefatory recital of the *Devī-sūkta,* before the recital of the *Saptaśatī* text is a reminder at all times. Outside Bengal, and within also, in place of the special imagery, the worship is performed during the *Navarātra* or the 'nine nights' ritual, on a consecrated pitcher of water and a bunch of the nine herbs and roots—emblems of nine forms of the Goddess, which gives it the character of a vegetation celebration or autumn festival. The artistic grouping and the main and attendant divinities and the harmonic idea have been developed in Bengal, and are proving to have an irresistible power of appeal in all parts of India.

The centre piece is the supreme Goddess of Power—the united might of all the gods, the Mother of the universe with her offsprings—the goddesses of learning and wealth and the gods of success and prowess—the lion in deadly grapple with the demon, which, centaur-like, bursts from the fierce buffalo-form, the arched tablet at the top, displaying the primal deities and the divine incarnations—all, together, making up a presence of unique solemn grandeur.

The *Durgā-pūjā* strikingly illustrates what Rabindranath, on a visit to Bhubaneshwar, discerned to be the message of pre-Buddhistic India. It is to enshrine Divinity in everyday life, to sense His movement in the joy and grief of every moment, the identity of the soul of the creation with the supreme Spirit. The divine presence, thus having been domesticated, so to say, its sanctity seems to pervade the social sphere in the preparations for this observance. In times not long gone by, it was the axis round which the family life and its year's routine revolved. The Mother Goddess evoked effusive sentiments like a married daughter on a periodical visit to her paternal home and the pathos of the *āgamanī* and *visarjana* (welcome and farewell) songs wring the very chords of tender sensibility. A curious blending of the sanctity of godhead and homely affections, enriched and refined human relations, a discipline of humanity, now fading away in the casual associations and formal affabilities of the *sarbajanīn* (public) pandal. The invocation or *bodhana* of the Deity at the feet of the bael-tree, the *adhivāsa* or the installation after lustration, the ablution of the image with waters, purporting to be from the springs and lakes and the seas and sacred rivers, the *pradakṣiṇa* or circumambulation of the panel, and the sombre midnight ritual of worship cause thrills and fervours among the functionaries and the laity as well. The grandeur of the conception in the rich elaborate ceremony and the sharpness of the conflict between the forces of good and evil are ideas that stand out from the worship and the accompanying song-recital—the *Caṇḍī*. This *Saptaśatī* text is a long-drawn lay of repeated battles between gods and demons. In the depiction of the clash between undoubted right and unmitigated wrong, and the ultimate triumph of good and absolute overthrow of evil, there is no touch of the moral indifferentism and lack of fibre, sometimes charged against the Oriental temperament.

In the story in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, demons wrest the sovereignty of heaven from the hierarchy of legitimate rulers, drive them out, and usurp all powers. And this happens on three occasions—under Madhu and Kaiṭabha, under Mahiṣāsura, and under the brothers Śumbha and Niśumbha. The supreme deities are moved, and the dispossessed gods cast off their helpless inertia, as the Mother Goddess, in whom the might of all the divinities unites, arises. In the first episode, she is hymned as *yoganidrā*—mystic slumber which overpowers Viṣṇu on his couch—the thousand-hooded serpent Śeṣa, lying on the ocean of cosmic dissolution. Two demons, born of Viṣṇu's earwax, threaten to devour Brahmā, seated on the lotus stemming from his navel. The mystic trance, then leaving the limbs of Viṣṇu, appears in a visible form before Brahmā. She is the incarnate spirit of the universe and the energy of all—now existent and now non-existent. She transcends the power of speech to describe her, as it is she who makes the supreme trinity—creator, protector, and destroyer—assume form and lulls even Viṣṇu to sleep. Under her power, the two demons, Madhu and Kaiṭabha, swell with pride, and for five millennia, wrestle with Viṣṇu and even tell the Supreme One to ask a boon of them. 'If you are pleased, be you both my victims' is the reply to which they agree, but add that He might slay them only where the waste of waters did not cover the earth. And so, they were stretched on Viṣṇu's thigh and beheaded by His flaming discus.

In the second episode, the gods are defeated and exiled from heaven by the buffalo-demon, Mahiṣāsura; the heavenly hosts are routed and the celestials roam the earth like mortals. In their distress, headed by Brahmā, they repair to the presence of Viṣṇu and Śiva. The relation of their plight kindles the wrath of all the gods, and their energies, issuing in forms and outfit distinctive of each, unite in a blaze rising like a peak and assume a woman's likeness which overspreads the three worlds. Śiva's energy makes her face, Viṣṇu's her arms, Indra's her middle, Varuṇa's her thighs, Earth's her lower waist, Brahmā's her feet. The sun's light forms her toes, Fire her three eyes, the two twilights her eyebrows, Wind her ears. Thus compact of all the divine potentialities, She shines, and the gods exult to behold her might and splendour. They severally give her their weapons—trident, discus, noose, mace, bow and quiver of arrows, and thunder, as also conch, rosary, and water-bowl. The sun, the lord of the day, gives his rays to issue from her pores, and Yama gives his scimitar and buckler of hide. The ocean endows her with jewels for her crest and all limbs, a lotus and a never-fading garland; the Himalaya gives a lion for her mount and the serpent-king Śeṣa, a wreath of jewel-crested snakes. Thus armed and honoured, she breaks forth into a peal of laughter which rends the skies and shocks the orbs in outer space, as well as the earth and hills below. A fight begins on a cosmic scale. The lion under her rages like a forest-fire, and fighting legions spring forth from her very breath. The beastly and ogrish demon chiefs Chikṣura and Cāmara fall one after the other, whereupon the infuriated buffalo-form of Mahiṣāsura, by its wild hideous pranks, spreads terror, as its feet dig into the earth which shrinks underneath; its horns dislodge the high hill tops and scatter the clouds; and the buffalo-form churns the ocean by its hoofs so as to flood the shores. And as Mahiṣāsura dashes against the Goddess, she binds it fast in her net. Thereupon, the beast assumes many changes of form, human, leonine, elephantine, and again, takes its proper shape and roars fearfully. Then, after a cheering cup, she sets her foot on the demon's shoulder, when it has half-emerged man-like from the buffalo-form, and spearing its heart, severs its head. The image of Durgā familiarly set up shows her in this posture, dealing the death-blow to the monstrous demon, sword-point and spear-thrust, the serpent's coil and the lion's fangs joining to make the end inevitable.

In the third and longest episode, the Goddess vanquishes the twin usurpers of heavenly powers—the brother-demons Śumbha and Niśumbha and their retinue. Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, their servants, find Pārvatī in resplendent beauty, riding a lion on a Himalayan peak, and bring word to their master. Returning, they demand of her to be the spouse of one of the brothers, lords as they are of all the world's choicest treasures. 'Whoever defeats me in battle and humbles my pride will be my master—that is my vow', she replies. 'We will rue this vaunt', they tell her, 'for who in the three worlds can stand against we two, vanquishers of heaven?' A long-drawn fight begins, and Dhūmralocana falls. Pārvatī, hard-pressed, her face darkened, then storms with rage, and from her knitted brows emerges Kālī, the Black One, terrible-faced and blood-bedraggled, wildly brandishing her scimitar, slays Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, whence her name Cāmuṇḍā. Then Caṇḍikā, emanating from the person of Durgā, and reinforced by the Śaktis or powers of all the gods in their distinctive forms and equipment, rushes against the two chiefs. She first sends Śiva himself as her emissary to demand the surrender of the enemy. Then Kālī and the consorts of the gods, the powers maternal, together fall upon the demon hordes and the havoc they make brings to the fore Raktabīja—the demon called 'Blood-seed'—whose every drop of blood touching the earth shoots up into another like him. The field teems with countless doubles of the demoniac form, like the armed figures springing from the dragon's teeth when sown. To put an end to this, at last, every ominous drop that falls at the blows of Caṇḍikā is drunk up by Kālī or Cāmuṇḍā. The Devī's sword then severs Niśumbha's head. Losing his lieutenants, and himself hard pressed, Śumbha twits the Goddess as backed by a host against a single foe. Thereupon, she stands out alone in her invincible might, the mother-deities, her emanations, all merging in her person. Pierced by her spear, the demon Śumbha sinks to the earth which, with its isles, seas, and hills, quakes and heavens rejoice.

The *Devī-Māhātmya* or the song recital of the Goddess's glory, has in it four litanies—superb hymns of invocation and thanksgiving uttered by Brahmā and the gods led by Indra, as also by the whole celestial host. These contain the root ideas of her being and attributes and the manifestations of her grace. She is Yoganidrā—the divine trance of self-communion, Viṣṇu-māyā, Mahāmāyā,—the supreme cosmic illusion. She is Caṇḍikā—the unrelenting, unrecoiling, awful destiny, through whose fear the cosmic powers perform their functions. She is Ambikā, the great Mother, who holds within her all the ranks of the gods and their śaktis, energies or consorts. In the last analysis, she is alone and supreme; like Viṣṇu's incarnations, she appears from age to age to redeem the world from the dead weight of evil and unrighteous power. Her meshes are the earthly attachments, the entanglements, which weaken and disable the spirit of man. Release comes from them through her grace, won by implicit surrender. She is the primal source of the forces that work in nature, the impulses that shape humanity. She is grace and terror, support of the universe she is. In all creatures, she is sentience (*cetanā*) and intelligence (*buddhi*), hunger and sleep, appearance (*chāyā*) and power, thirst and forbearance (*kṣānti*), the types or categories (*jāti*), sense of shame and love of peace, steadfast devotion and glowing beauty (*kānti*), fortune and prosperity, memory, compassion, vocation (*vṛtti*) contentment, motherly instinct, delusion (*bhrānti*), permeation or inclusiveness (*vyāpti*), and mind-energy (*citi*), pervading all that is. The invisible, yet inexorable, urges and indissoluble ties that hold society together emanate from her. She is the Creatress, Mistress, and the Protectress of the universe.

In magnifying and elevating her above all, Tāntricism continues the Vedic line of monistic thought—the one and only divine substance—everything proceeding from the same supernal source. Says the *Devī-sūkta*: 'I move about at will like the wind wrapping all the worlds—beyond heaven, beyond this earth—such is my majesty. I sustain the Creator, the Fosterer, and the Enricher. I originated heaven and the Father at the head of all. My home is in the waters of the ocean. Then I pervaded all the worlds, and with my form, touched the yonder heaven. I am the queen of all the worlds, the provider of all wealth, the knower of myself as the Supreme Brahman, and therefore, the sacrificer's foremost object of adoration.' The *devas* have been installed in many places with many bodies (life-forms) to enter and abide in. In the *Kena Upaniṣad*, Umā Haimavatī, without whose impulse, Fire and Wind and Indra cannot function, is affirmed as the ultimate Power of all the divinities. Passages from the *Saptaśatī* may be easily cited as expanding the germinal thought. This idea of a single primal principle behind the phenomenal world is the one golden vein in the rich lore of Indian tradition. The Devī is addressed in *Śrī Caṇḍī* thus: 'Thou art Viṣṇu's power of infinite potency, the seed of the cosmos, the supreme illusion, all creation is under Thy spell; and again, Thou art *natura naturans* of all and workest through the three primal qualities or functional modes.' Brahman and Śakti are the obverse and the reverse of the same coin of thought. Reality, worshipped under the aspect of wisdom, is the male principle Śiva; under the power aspect, it is the female principle or Śakti. Viṣṇu is the pervasive aspect of Reality which predominates in the *Saptaśatī*. Hence, perhaps, Śiva is less conspicuous as her associate and she is called Viṣṇu Māyā—Vaiṣṇavī Śakti. Brahman, the Absolute, and Śakti, the relative, are not apart from each other. This non-duality is conveyed also by the Śiva-Śakti relationship. If Śiva is Brahman, she is Brahmamayī. If he is Sat, she is Satī—Being in itself and the power to be such. If he is Cit, she is Citī, pure consciousness and consciousness as power. If he is Ānanda, she is Ānandamayī or Paramānandalaharī—perfect bliss and the blissful wave of absolute play. If he is Mahākāla, she is Mahākālī, the formless Absolute and the great Power, respectively. It has been remarked that, after having been overshadowed by the male divinities of the patriarchal Aryan pantheon, the non-Aryan or pre-Aryan Dravidian matriarchal tradition resurged in the later Upaniṣads, under the many names of Śakti. But, it may be pointed out that in the realm of the Spirit, Indian thought has owned no sex-division. And the *Śvetāśvatara* text says: 'Thou art the female and thou art the male, thou art the boy and the maid, decayed through age, thou totterest with a staff, thou art born multifaced.' If, in the concepts of godhead, man is incorrigibly anthropomorphic, the Indian tradition of the Mother Goddess effaces the narrow limitation of exclusive maleness in the divine idea, and associates sanctity and succour and solace with Deus as Pater and Mater. In words like the *Gītā's, Śrī Caṇḍī* also assures the Mother's protection whenever the world is afflicted by evil powers. In one of these incarnations, she says that, when drought and famine will last a century, she will sustain the people with herbs grown on her person and slay the demon Durgama, and hence be known as Durgā.

The boons that are solicited of the Mother Goddess, it is generally commented, are the goods of this world—beauty and wealth, fame and destruction of enemies. They are frankly temporal, material in values. In the *Śrī Caṇḍī,* the exiled king Suratha and Samādhi, the Vaiśya, forsaken by their kin, respectively ask for the restoration of the kingdom and the inner illumination to loosen worldly attachments—the sense of me and mine. But, unlike Samādhi, the Tāntric devotee's most stressed attitude is reflected in a verse: 'They are esteemed in society, theirs is riches, they have high repute of all kinds, and their sum of pious deeds never lessens, they are the worthy people with wife and children and servants devoted to them—they, to whom Thou, ever the giver of prosperity, art gracious.' Adored, she is, no doubt, said to be the giver of enjoyment, heavenly bliss, and emancipation; but the special grace that the gods invoke on mortals from her ensures increase of worldly prosperity—affluence and power and happiness on earth. Stress is not laid on the unreality of life and the ascetic manner of living, but acceptance of the common values that mankind, since the dawn of history, has cherished and will strenuously seek, till wholly transformed from within. The world, as it is, is affirmed, neither denied nor forsaken, nor sought to be reformed. Not turning away from the allure of the world and seeking isolation (*kaivalya*) like an ascetic or *yogin,* the Śākta devotee, as the normal child of the world, is truly a child of his Great Mother—the supreme divine Force, and is content to accept from her whatever gifts she chooses to grant. Supplicated, she gives realization; pleased, she gives prosperity; when she is gracious, she grants the boon of deliverance. The attachments which ensnare are her meshes, and release therefrom comes through her grace; she binds and she alone loosens. Resignation to her will is man's whole duty; hence the recurrent chimes of reverent submission, the reiterated salutations which ring throughout the *Saptaśatī—namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo namaḥ.*

Immanence and omnipresence of the Divinity and unreserved surrender to her dispensation are the ideas that stand out in the worship of the Mother Goddess in the setting of the *Caṇḍī.* She animates all and interpenetrates the panorama and evolutions of nature; and has at once animated and entered the field or matter of nature; she animates, inhabits, and is the manifested universe and all its forms. 'Thou art the sole support of the world, for Thou abidest in the form of the earth, by Thee, in the form of water, is everything refreshed, for Thy power is inviolable.' Acquiescence in her pleasure is a virtue of necessity. In time of weal, she is the Goddess of fortune, ensuring increase, in time of privation, she is ill-fortune, leading to extinction. The communing spirit should think 'I do nought', knowing as he does the verity, says the *Gītā.* And the *Devī-sūkta* has the verse: 'By my agency, one who sees, who breathes, or who hears what is spoken eats his food. Unwittingly, they have their being in me. Hearken to what I tell you, for it is verily the truth.' Whatsoever the creature does is therefore her doing. She is the agent, he is the instrument. Devotion is the sum of this knowledge, and the worshipper exclaims: 'O Universal Mother, whatever I do is Thy adoration.' This attitude of acceptance is an ancient and main thread in the web of Indian religious thought, and it lifts human interests and desires to the status of sacrificial ritual. Ghora Āṅgirasa, in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*

(III.17.1-6), sets out this interpretation of life to Kṛṣṇa: 'When he hungers and thirsts and is unsatisfied, that is his initiation. When he eats and drinks and takes his pleasure, that is his participation in the sacrificial session; when he laughs and feasts and consorts with a woman, that is his offciating in the ceremony; when he devotes himself to austerity or penance or makes gifts or does right or does not hurt or speaks the truth, these are fees to the priest; wherefore, they say, he will beget and he has begotten, and that is his rebirth. And Death is the final ablution.' Similarly, in the *Ānandalaharī* of Śaṅkarācārya, occurs the stanza: 'May speech be repetition of thy name, all crafts hand-postures of worship, walking wheeling round thy presence, eating and the like the rite of offering oblations, slumber obeisance, all kinds of pleasure the act of self-resignation, and all my doings forms of service to Thee.'

In the development of Indian thought, three phases are often marked off—Aryan or Vedic, pre-Aryan or Dravidian, and the medieval or Hindu. They stand for frank and zestful joy of life, ascetic renunciation and self-effacement, and a return to the first attitude—the Aryan pull of life. It is a sort of ethical dialectics—world and life affirmation jostling with world and life negation, and leading ultimately to a fuller resurgence of the former attitude in the Vaiṣṇava and Śākta Tāntricism. How far these attitudes—love of life and ascetic discipline and dedication of all experience—can be chronologically separated and shown to be exclusive cults will, perhaps, be always a point in the tangled skein of Indian culture. Perhaps, the Indian tradition, at its start, is best likened to the elderly mistress of the house with her pot of sundry miscellany, its content never failing at the hour of need, as pictured by Sri Ramakrishna in his dialogues. Without wading through these deeper waters here and now, the devotional approach to the Mother Goddess may, in conclusion, be best touched up in the Paramahamsadeva's words on the beatitude of the knowledge of omnipresence: 'The perfect devotee does not suffer; for he can both visualize and experience life and the universe as the revelation of that supreme Divine Force, the all-comprehensive living Being in its cosmic aspect of playful, aimless display (*līlā*)—which brings pain as well as joy, but in its bliss, transcends them both' (*The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 139). She is both *avidyā, mahāmāyā, mahāmoha* (the illusion which enmeshes the world-cycle), and *vidyā*—the perfect knowledge which liberates—*vidyāśisā bhagavatī paramā hi devī*. Through her is gained the end of all Śāstra—happy life on earth, heaven thereafter, and in the end, liberation—the realization of the Upaniṣadic assurance: '*Avidyayā mṛtyuṁ tīrtvā vidyayā'mṛtam aśnute*—One crosses death through *avidyā*, and through *vidyā*, attains immortality.'

THE VEDĀNTA AND ITS FUNDAMENTALS

By Swami Ranganathananda

As a philosophic term, the Vedānta denotes the idea of the culmination of knowledge in wisdom and stands for that comprehensive *weltanshauung* or world-view, which has been the inspiration behind the movements of India's mind and soul these five thousand years. Let us cast a brief glance at the way ancient India raised this enduring structure of thought, and at the nature and content of that thought.

The Vedic age of ancient Indian history was drawing to a close. The atmosphere was charged with a mood of questioning and enquiry; the spirit of freedom was in the air. The interest of the Indian mind was shifting from the study of the external world to the study of the internal world, from external physical nature to the inner nature of man. The previous study could not give conclusive answers to the pressing problems of thought—the nature of the universe, of man, and of his destiny. Perhaps, the study of man, it was felt, might help to unravel the mystery of existence; even otherwise, it offered a new and mysterious field of investigation. This phenomenon in the history of ancient India is paralleled by a similar interest in the subject of man and in his inner life being evinced by thinkers in the modern age. The inner world, constituted by the mind of man with its facts of consciousness, the moral sense, the feeling of individuality, logical and rational powers, the states of waking, dream, and sleep, and a vague sense of deathlessness and survival, offered a challenge to the gifted thinkers of the day; and they accepted this challenge and wrestled with it, individually and in groups, with a persistence and objectivity rare in the history of philosophic thought. The impressive record of these endeavours and the truths and insights gained therefrom have been preserved for humanity in the immortal literature, the Upaniṣads, which form the closing portions of the vast and varied Vedic literature. Since they contain the philosophy, the quintessence of the Vedas, the Upaniṣads are also known as the Vedānta.

The Vedānta is the product of a fearless quest of truth by minds which were 'undisturbed by the thought of there being a public to please or critics to appease' as Max Müller terms it. And the search was thoroughly objective and detached; free from the moods and predilections of personality, thought forged ahead, step by step, under the stimulus of a passion for truth and in a perfect atmosphere of freedom; diverse facts of the world of internal nature were noted and classified; theories were advanced, challenged, subjected to verification, and finally accepted or rejected, unhampered by fear of authority or love of dogma; accepted beliefs were questioned, sometimes ridiculed, often rejected without a tear; and there emerged the beautiful edifice of thought known as the Vedānta, impersonal in approach, and therefore universal in spirit, whose rationality and spirituality have made it a synthesis of philosophy, religion, and ethics in one.

This was the fruit of the intellectual and spiritual ferment which swept over a portion of India at that time—the regions comprised in modern Eastern Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and Western Bihar. The best minds of the age were involved in it, sages and kings, men and women and youths. The Upaniṣads give us a picture of a dynamic age: an arresting procession of students and teachers in quest of truth and wisdom, an impressive record of their dialogues in small groups and large assemblies, a flight now and then into the regions of the sublime caught in snatches of poetry, vigorous and graceful, an array of beautiful metaphors and telling imageries serving as feathers to their arrows of thought in flight—these varied features of the Upaniṣads invest them with the beauty and charm of enduring literature and the loftiness and vigour of lived philosophy.

The *ṛṣis* or sages of the Upaniṣads discovered the laws that govern the inner world much as physical scientists discover the laws of external physical nature. The laws, or the facts which they seek to explain, are not 'created' by the scientists; they are as beginningless as the universe itself, but they were unknown to man till he gave himself a discipline in detachment, objectivity, and precision, born of a passion for truth, which constitutes the scientific mind and temper. The scientist is but the 'discoverer' of the laws of nature; and knowledge of these laws enables him to control the forces and workings of nature. The same is the position which Indian thought accords to these sages or *ṛṣis* who discovered the spiritual truths recorded in the Vedas, aided as they were by minds sharpened by intellectual, moral, and spiritual discipline.

'By the Vedas no books are meant', says Swami Vivekananda in his address to the Chicago Parliament of Religions. 'They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons at different times. Just as the law of gravitation existed before its discovery and would exist if all humanity forgot it, so it is with the laws that govern the spiritual world. The moral, ethical, and spiritual relations between soul and soul and between individual spirits and the Father of all spirits, were there before their discovery, and would remain even if we forget them.

'The discoverers of these laws are called *ṛṣis* (sages), and we honour them as perfected beings. I am glad to tell this audience that some of the very greatest of them were women.'

This Ṛṣihood, this capacity to discover spiritual truths, is not a national Indian monopoly; Indian thought holds that it is a universal phenomenon. In fact, the Vedānta holds that it is this very effort and its culmination that constitute religion; religion is *anubhava*, realization, and not a matter of mere belief or conformity, creed or dogma. The Vedānta has taught India to recognize in non-Indian sages like Christ or Lao Tse, St. Francis or Eckhart authentic expressions of man's highest spiritual experience. One of the enduring fruits of Vedānta has been peace and harmony, tolerance and acceptance.

This flows from its teaching of the non-duality of the ultimate Reality and the possibility of different approaches to it. The *Ṛg-Veda* gave eloquent expression to this great idea in its famous line: *'Ekaṁ Sat, Viprāḥ bahudhā vadanti'*—Truth is one, sages call it by various names. This sentiment was taken up and amplified by every subsequent age of Indian thought—from Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*, through Buddha and Aśoka, Śaṅkara and Akbar, down to Sri Ramakrishna in our own age—until it has become a most distinguishing mark of the Indian religious and cultural outlook.

Another important teaching of the Vedānta is the innate Divinity of man. To the purified vision of the Vedāntic sages, man appeared as Divinity, struggling for expression through the psycho-physical organism. Purity, knowledge, and freedom are his essential nature. 'The Kingdom of Heaven is within you', assures Jesus. The story of evolution is the story of the manifestation of this Divinity through suitable changes in the environment and in the organism. This evolution is thwarted or helped by adverse or favourable natural conditions in the early stages, and by social and personal factors in the later ones. The spirit in man, in the march of evolution, overcomes all obstacles to its free expression and achieves civilization, culture, and spiritual enlightenment stage by stage. Christs and Buddhas represent the final goal of this long travail of evolution.

And that introduces us to the third significant idea of the Vedānta that the goal of life is spiritual realization, the fullest manifestation of the Divine within, in life and conduct. Food and clothing, shelter and security, power and knowledge, politics and society are not ends in themselves, says the Vedānta. They are but the means, while the end is the fullest development of man, the complete manifestation of the perfection already in him. The exhortation of Jesus expresses this idea and this hope: 'Be ye therefore perfect even as the Father which is in heaven is perfect.'

The Vedānta views the life of man in its wholeness. Its theme is Man—Man in search of the fulness of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. Part of this search is in the external world; but the most significant part of this search lies in the internal world; the first gives social welfare through the applications of the physical and social sciences; the second gives spiritual freedom through the disciplines of morality and religion. There can be no conflict between the two—the secular as against the sacred—as they both refer only to different stages in the growth of the same individual. And the Vedānta emphasizes this idea of growth, development, and realization as the central characteristic of life at all levels—physical, mental, moral, or spiritual. Its absence constitutes stagnation and death at every level. Hence its constant refrain is: 'Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.'

The Vedānta arose out of the literature of the Upaniṣads. At a later age, it found its best and most dynamic expression as a comprehensive spirituality through Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*. Still later, it found another significant development as the spirituality of renunciation and compassion in the great Buddha; twelve hundred years later still, appeared the brilliant philosopher Śaṅkara, in whom the Vedānta achieved its most rational formulation, with the widest intellectual sweep. And in our own time, in the last century, the Vedānta found two dynamic representatives in Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda who gathered up all the past developments of this ancient thought to produce a sweeping synthesis of all human thought, by joining to it the dynamic affirmations of modern scientific and social thought as well. In spite of its hoary antiquity, the Vedānta has been young and dynamic in every past epoch of history. But its most fascinating story is only just opening up in the context of modern world conditions created by science and technology, in which the thinking humanity of the whole world has become its audience.

THE DYNAMIC ETHICS OF JOHN DEWEY

By Dr. S. N. L. Shrivastava

John Dewey, the noted American philosopher, educationist, and thinker, propounds a dynamic view of ethics, which does not admit the existence of any fixed ideal or fixed principles. In his ethics, he maintains the same point of view he does in his theory of knowledge. He is well known as an advocate of the Instrumentalist Theory of knowledge, according to which there is no absolute truth. Truth never *is*, it is what *happens* to events. Thought is not a process of reduplication or copying of an external determinate object, but a process of experimenting with it, changing it, moulding it to suit one's vital demands. Ideas are plans of actions, taking into account future consequences, with reference to the weal or woe of the organism. The ethics of Dewey is in perfect consonance with this theory of knowledge.

We propose to give in this article a brief account of the point of view and cardinal principles of John Dewey's ethics and consider them critically.

JOHN DEWEY'S APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF MORALS

Initially, it would be important to remember that Dewey advocates a new approach in understanding human nature. Instead of giving a scientific account of human nature, as it is made and developed by its interaction with the environment, moralists, says Dewey, have hitherto been condemning it as something evil and debased, to be subjugated and changed by an effort of the will. The moral ideal has been regarded as being wholly alien to human nature, and the whole business of morality has been conceived as consisting in the curbing and pruning of this rebellious human nature. Dewey advocates a radical departure from this point of view.

In the very Introduction to his important work, *Human Nature and Conduct,* Dewey has thus explained the genesis of the above-mentioned approach to the problem of morals: '"Give a dog a bad name and hang him." Human nature has been the dog of professional moralists, and consequences accord with the proverb. Man's nature has been regarded with suspicion, with fear, with sour looks, sometimes with enthusiasm for its possibilities, but only when these were placed in contrast with its actualities. It has appeared to be so evilly disposed that the business of morality was to prune and curb it; it would be thought better if it could be replaced by something else. It has been supposed that morality would be quite superfluous, were it not for the weakness, bordering on depravity, of human nature. Some writers with a more genial conception have attributed the current blackening to theologians who have thought to honour the divine by disparaging the human. Theologians have, doubtless, taken a gloomier view of man than have pagans and secularists. But this explanation doesn't take us far. For, after all, these theologians are themselves human, and they would have been without influence, if the human audience had not somehow responded to them.

'Morality is largely concerned with controlling human nature. When we are controlling anything, we are acutely aware of what resists us. So moralists were led, perhaps, to think of human nature as evil, because of its reluctance to yield to control, its rebelliousness under the yoke. But this explanation only raises another question. Why did morality set up rules so foreign to human nature? The ends it insisted upon, the regulations it imposed were, after all, outgrowths of human nature. Why, then, was human nature so averse to them? Moreover, rules can be obeyed, and ideals realized, only as they appeal to something in human nature and awaken in it an active response. Moral principles that exalt themselves by degrading human nature are, in effect, committing suicide. Or else, they involve human nature in unending civil war, and treat it as a hopeless mess of contradictory forces.'[1]

Thus the initial error of most moralists and theologians, Dewey holds, consists in their over-condemnation of human nature and their failure to understand it in a scientific manner.

Let us then turn to Dewey's own explanation of human nature. In explaining human nature in a thoroughly scientific manner, Dewey has succeeeded admirably. Indeed, the right way of dealing with human nature depends on our right understanding of it. We make a faulty approach towards understanding human nature when we try to understand it as something subjective and self-closed, abstracted from nature and the social environment. 'The intelligent acknowledgement of the continuity of nature, man, and society will, alone, secure a growth of morals, which will be serious without being fanatical, aspiring without sentimentality, adapted to reality without conventionality, sensible without taking the form of calculation of profits, idealistic without being romantic.'[2] 'A morals based on study of human nature, instead of upon disregard for it, would find the facts of man continuous with those of the rest of nature and would, thereby, ally ethics with physics and biology. It would find nature and the activities of one person co-terminous with those of other human beings, and therefore, link ethics with the study of history, sociology, law, and economics.'[3]

The base from which Dewey's ethical thinking starts is the fact of man's continuity with nature and other human beings or the social environment. Once we lose sight of this fact, we shall go astray in our attempt to understand human nature correctly. The individual's habits, by which term Dewey means

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[1] John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* (The Modern Library Series), Introduction.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

'moral dispositions', are formed in interaction with nature and the social environment. They do not belong exclusively to a self, isolated from natural and social surroundings. 'Honesty, chastity, malice, peevishness, courage, triviality, are not private possessions of a person. They are working adaptations of personal capacities with environing forces. All virtues and vices are habits which incorporate environing forces. They are interactions of elements constituted by the make-up of an individual with elements supplied by the out-door world. They can be studied as objectively as physiological functions, and can be modifed by change of either personal or social elements.

'If an individual were alone in the world, he would form his habits (assuming the impossible, namely, that he would be able to form them) in a moral vacuum.'[4]

Before we proceed further, it would be desirable to understand very clearly what Dewey means by habits, since 'habit' is a key conception in Dewey's account of conduct. By 'habit', we usually mean a sensory-motor habit, a physiological process, such as the habit of cycling or type-writing. But Dewey uses the word 'habit' in a deeper sense. By 'habit', Dewey means a permanent or a standing disposition to respond to particular situations of a type, in a particular way. It is not response to any *one* particular case, but to a type. The formation of these habits depends on the individual's natural endowments of physiological make-up and his instinctual and emotional urges, but these again are modified by social influences, the approbations, and disapprobations of society. To quote Dewey: 'Some activity proceeds from a man; then it sets up reactions in the surroundings. Others approve, disapprove, protest, encourage, share, and resist. Even letting a man alone is a definite response. Envy, admiration, and imitation are complicities. Neutrality is non-existent. Conduct is always shared; this is the difference between it and a physiological process. It is not an ethical 'ought' that conduct *should* be social. It *is* social whether good or bad.'[5]

In the following passage, Dewey admirably brings out the dependence of man's morals on nature and the social environment: 'Morals is as much a matter of interaction with his social environment, as walking is an interaction of legs with a physical environment. The character of walking depends upon the strength and competency of legs. But it, also, depends upon whether a man is walking in a bog or a paved street, upon whether there is a safeguarded path set aside or whether he has to walk amid dangerous vehicles. If the standard of morals is low, it is because the education given by the interaction of the individual with his social environment is defective. Of what avail is it to preach simplicity and contentment of life when communal admiration goes to the man who 'succeeds'—who makes himself conspicuous and envied because of command of money and other forms of power? If a child gets on by peevishness or intrigues, then others are his accomplices who assist in the habits which are built up. The notion that an abstract ready-made conscience exists in individuals and that it is only necessary to make an occasional appeal to it and to indulge in occasional crude rebukes and punishments, is associated with causes of lack of definitive and orderly moral advance. For it is associated with lack of attention to social forces.'[6]

Moral improvement of individals cannot be brought about merely by preachings and exhortations. Objective conditions should also be changed. So long as conditions exist which are conducive to a bad result, no amount of appeal to an effort of the will to change it can be of any avail. To quote Dewey's words: 'Conditions have been formed for producing a bad result and the bad results will occur as long as those conditions exist. They can no more be dismissed by a direct effort of the will than the conditions which create drought can be dispelled by whistling for the wind.'[7]

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[4] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 318-19.

Again: 'We may desire abolition of war, industrial justice, greater equality of opportunity for all. But no amount of preaching goodwill or the golden rule or the cultivation of the sentiments of love and equity will accomplish the results. There must be change in objective arrangements and institutions. We must work on the environment, not merely on the hearts of men. To think otherwise is to suppose that flowers can be raised in a desert or motor cars run in a jungle. Both things can happen and without a miracle. But only by first changing jungle and desert.'[8]

Dewey is perfectly right in insisting upon change in objective conditions as a means to the moral improvement of the individuals, for the social environment, undoubtedly, goes a long way in shaping the habits or moral dispositions of individuals. But how can changes in objective circumstances be brought about except by a change in ideas? Who would change the jungle and the desert, unless the ideas of growing flowers and running motor cars commended themselves to him? The Instrumentalist contends that events change ideas; our contention is that ideas change events. And our ideas themselves change under the stress of the ideals and values present to our consciousness. Unless beauty and happiness of our fellow beings commended themselves to us as intrinsic values, we would not think of turning deserts into flower gardens and cutting jungles for making roads. If external conditions conducive to bad results continue to exist, it is because men's minds have not become sufficiently alive to the necessity of changing them. Change in external conditions will necessarily follow change in the inner realm of ideas. And our ideas change in proportion as we become growingly aware of the moral ideal present in our consciousness.

But Dewey does not admit the presence of any *a priori* ideal in human consciousness. In fact, he does not admit the existence of any ideal as such. There are no ends or goals according to him to which activity is directed. Ends or goals are turning points in activity. They are not the termini of deliberations. 'Having an end or aim is thus a characteristic of present activity. It is the means by which an activity becomes adapted when, otherwise, it would be blind and disorderly, or by which it gets meaning when, otherwise, it would be mechanical. In a strict sense an end-in-view is a *means* in present action; present action is not a means to remote end. Men do not shoot because targets exist, but they set up targets in order that throwing and shooting may be more effective and significant.

'A mariner does not sail towards the stars, but by noting the stars, he is aided in conducting his present activity of sailing. A port or harbour is his objective, but only in the sense of *reaching* it, not of taking possession of it. The harbour stands in his thought as a significant point at which his activity will not cease when his will needs re-direction. Activity will not cease when the port is attained, but merely the *present direction* of activity. The port is as truly the beginning of another mode of activity, as it is the terminus of the present one.'[9] 'When ends are regarded literally as ends to action rather than as directive stimuli to present choice, they are frozen and isolated.'[10]

Why, then, do men attach themselves to fixed and final ends? Because, says Dewey, of their fixed habits of thought and their timidity to adventure and experiment. 'Ignoring the fact that truth can be bought only by the adventure of experiment, dogmatism turns truth into an insurance company. Fixed ends upon one side and fixed 'principles' —that is, authoritative rules—on the other, are props for a feeling of safety, the refuge of the timid and the means by which the bold prey upon the timid.'[11]

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[7] *Ibid.*
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 226.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 227.

Are the moral principles developed in past ages to be completely thrown away? No, says Dewey. 'The choice is not between throwing away rules previously developed and sticking obstinately by them. The intelligent alternative is to revise, adapt, expand, and alter them. The problem is one of continuous vital readaptation.'[12]

Now, when it is said that the old moral principles are not to be completely thrown away and substituted by *altogether new ones*, but have to be revised and readapted, it is tacitly assumed that there are elements of *permanent* and universal value in them, an inner core of truth which deserves to be preserved in a new cover. The question then arises: What is it which is of permanent value in them or what is that essential inner core of truth which they contain?

This brings us to a consideration of the meaning of moral values according to Dewey. 'Morality', according to Dewey, 'is a continuing process, not a fixed achievement. Morals means growth of conduct in meaning; at least, it means that kind of expansion in meaning which is consequent upon observations of the conditions and outcome of conduct. . . . It is learning the meaning of what we are about and employing that meaning in action.'[13] Progress in morality is not to be measured by reference to a remote goal. It is 'present reconstruction, adding fullness and distinctness of meaning'. Moral progress is reconstructing the present, passing from the worse *into* the better, and not simply *towards* it. Progress is recurrent. A fixed and final perfection would mean going to sleep or dying. Dewey's categorical imperative is: 'So act as to increase the meaning of present experience.'

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT OF DEWEY'S CONTRIBUTION TO ETHICAL THOUGHT

We agree with John Dewey to the extent of holding that morality is its own end and there is no end exterior to morality. But the question arises: What gives the *moral* quality to an action? In other words, how do we distinguish between action as such, action as a mere manipulation of energy, and 'moral' action, action with a moral significance? Our contention is that we cannot make a judgement about morality at all, except in the light of an *ideal* of morality already present in our consciousness. Moral judgement, as distinguished from factual judgement, is valuational; and no evaluation of a conduct is possible, except with reference to a 'norm' resident *a priori* in the evaluating consciousness. If moral progress, as Dewey interprets it, is reconstructing the present, passing from the worse into the better, it does involve judgement of moral quality which is impossible, except in reference to a moral ideal. The moral 'ideal' is not a future event to be realized; it is ever present in our consciousness. Our action is moral in proportion as it is in accord with it. From the fact that our actual conduct ever falls short of the moral ideal in its fullness and progresses towards it only asymptotically, it by no means follows that the ideal in its fullness does not exist or is ever in the making. Our contention is that it is not the ideal which progresses or is adapted or modified, but conduct, empirically realized in the world of space and time, individually and collectively, and progressing often falteringly and with set-backs. Just as there is no progress in the ideal of knowledge, but only in an increasing accumulation of ever new facts, so also there is no progress in the ideal of morality, but only in the adaptations of our conduct to it. The necessity of ever new adaptations does not nonsuit the reality of an ideal. What is adapted, modified, changed, experimented with is *conduct,* not the *ideal* of conduct. Ethical principles and values do not emerge *from* or are derived *from* conduct. Nicolai Hartmann has rightly observed: 'Ethical values are not to be discovered in the conduct of man. On the contrary, one must have knowledge of them, in order to distinguish whether his conduct accords with them or violates them. On this point, ethical research cannot reckon upon any datum by the mere analysis of which moral principles can be made manifest. This is the basis of the fundamental difficulty in ethics. The discovery of values must take another route. The mere actuality of instances cannot be our guide.'[14]

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[11] *Ibid.*, p. 237.
[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 239-40.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 280.

John Dewey's *Human Nature and Conduct* is a work of considerable importance. It would be no exaggeration to say that it is a classic of our times. It is a remarkable and original contribution to the analysis of human nature and conduct. It has indicated the right approach to the understanding and study of human nature. Dewey has rightly pointed out that the age-old tradition of the moralists in condemning human nature as something innately evil and perverse and envisaging the moral task as consisting chiefly in its complete suppression or annihilation is a fundamentally faulty approach. The moral ideal of man could not be something utterly alien to human nature. It must be essentially related to it.

The first step towards the right understanding of human nature, Dewey has rightly pointed out, is to realize that man is not a self-closed 'self' or entity, but is continuous with nature and other persons in the social environment. His habits, or dispositions to act, are formed largely by the reactions of the social environment on him. Traditional moralists have laid undue emphasis on the effort of the will to change and reform human nature. They have failed to recognize in a measure in which they should have done that, without altering objective conditions in the social environment, individual natures cannot be changed.

There is another fallacy of the old moralists and psychologists to which Dewey has called our attention. These old moralists and psychologists have complacently gone on thinking that human conduct is the outcome of a certain number of fixed instincts which must have their own inevitable consequences, and nothing can interfere with them. Conduct is explained solely in terms of these instincts. 'Man has been resolved into a definite collection of primary instincts which may be numbered, catalogued, and exhaustively described one by one. Theorists differ only, or chiefly, as to their number and ranking. Some say one, self-love; some two, egoism and altruism; some three, greed, fear, and glory; while, today, writers of a more empirical turn run the number upto fifty and sixty.'[15] Again: 'Just now another simplification is current. All instincts go back to the sexual, so that *cherchez la femme* (under multitudinous symbolic disguises) is the last word of science with respect to the analysis of conduct.'[16]

In this account of conduct, Dewey finds the fallacy of over-simplification. It is forgotten how much these instincts are modified by objective social institutions. The mistake of regarding certain instincts as 'psychic forces' is analogous to the mistake of the scientists of the last generation who regarded gravitation and combustion etc. as 'physical forces'.

Instinctual operations are modified by environmental conditions: 'Even in the cases of hunger and sex, where the channels of action are fairly demarcated by antecedent conditions (or 'nature'), the actual content and feel of hunger and sex, are indefinitely varied according to their social contexts. ... The treatment of sex by psycho-analysts is most instructive, for it flagrantly exhibits both the consequences of artificial simplication and the transformation of social results into psychic causes. Writers, usually male, hold forth on the psychology of woman, as if they were dealing with a Platonic universal entity, although they habitually treat men as individuals, varying with structure and environment.'[17]

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[14] Nicolai Hartmann, *Ethics*, Vol. I., pp. 99-100.

[15] Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 132.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 133.

What does morality consist in? Dewey's answer to this question is that it consists in reasonable deliberation and moral failure in unreasonable deliberation. This is how Dewey explains the process of deliberation: 'We are always biassed beings, tending in one direction rather than in another. The occasion of deliberation is an *excess* of preferences, not natural antipathy or an absence of likings. We want things that are incompatible with one another; therefore, we have to make a choice of what we *really* want, of the course of action, that is, which most fully releases activities. Choice is not the emergence of preference out of indifference. It is the emergence of a unified preference out of competing preferences. Biases that had held one another in check now, temporarily at least, reinforce one another, and constitute a unified attitude. The moment arrives when imagination pictures an objective consequence of action which supplies an adequate stimulus and releases definitive action. All deliberation is a search for a *way* to act, not for a final terminus. Its office is to facilitate stimulation.'[18]

Having thus explained the process of deliberation, Dewey goes on to say that the chances are of deliberation being both reasonable and unreasonable. It is reasonable, in so far as it succeeds in harmonizing and reconciling the various competing impulses; unreasonable, in so far as it is dominated or swept away by one single impulse, without effecting a harmony with the others. Impulse starts the deliberation, but thought must modulate and control it. In Dewey's words: 'There is reasonable and unreasonable choice. The object thought of may simply stimulate some impulse or habit to a pitch of intensity, where it is temporarily irresistible. It, then, overrides all competitors and secures for itself the sole right of way. The object looms large in imagination; it swells to fill the field. It allows no room for alternatives; it absorbs us, enraptures, carries us away, sweeps us off our feet by its own attractive force. Then choice is arbitrary, unreasonable. But the object thought of may be one which stimulates by unifying, harmonizing, different competing tendencies. It may release an activity in which all are fulfilled, not indeed, in their original form, but in a 'sublimated' fashion, that is, in a way which modifies the original direction of each by reducing it to a component along with others, in an action of transformed quality. Nothing is more extraordinary than the delicacy, promptness, and ingenuity with which deliberation is capable of making eliminations and recombinations in projecting the course of a possible activity. To every shade of imagined circumstance, there is a vibrating response; and to every complex situation, a sensitiveness as to its integrity, a feeling of whether it does justice to all facts, or overrides some to the advantage of others. Decision is reasonable when deliberation is so conducted.'[19]

Now, has not Dewey elaborated, in his above account of the process of deliberation and the nature of reasonable and unreasonable deliberation, an *ideal* of the moral life, a fixed and unalterable principle of morality as consisting in the harmonization of all competing impulses into a new, transformed and sublimated form? Can *this ideal* be ever denied as an ideal of the moral life? Surely, Dewey would not answer this question in the affirmative. Situations and the influx of competing impulses in the mind can change endlessly, but the *ideal* of harmonizing them and sublimating them is an ideal of conduct, which Dewey would commend on *all* occasions, and for all times. That is *a fixed and permanent ideal* which he has formulated, an unalterable principle of the moral life; and this takes away much of the sting of his invectives against permanent ideals and universal principles. The case of Dewey, in denying fixed and permanent principles of morality, is analogous to the case of modern logical positivists who deny metaphysics in so many words and by so many ingenious arguments, and yet, what they leave over as the net result of all their efforts is *a metaphysics*, from their own perspective, in so far as it is a statement applicable to all reality and existence. Of course, the moral ideal in the sense of a fixed event lying *outside* activity may be denied, but an ideal which 'regulates' activity cannot be denied, and it is the task of every moral philosophy to formulate it. Dewey has himself formulated one—the modulation and control of all impulses by thought and the harmonization of all competing impulses, without being swept off our feet by any one of them—the ideal of reasonable deliberation. What else but this has been the pith and kernel of the best moral teachings all down the ages?

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[17] *Ibid.*, p. 153.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 193.

[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 193-94.

SAGE VĀLMĪKI

By Sri M. V. Sridatta Sarma

Kūjantaṁ Rāma-Rāmeti madhuraṁ madhurākṣaram
Āruhya kavitāśākhāṁ vande Vālmīki-kokilam.

'I offer my prostrations to that cuckoo in the form of Vālmīki, which coos, as it were, the pleasing notes "Rāma, Rāma", perching itself upon the lofty boughs of the tree of poesy.'

The *Rāmāyaṇa* is the story of that illustrious ruler of the house of Ikṣvākus, who was the very incarnation of Viṣṇu, and is sung by that immortal bard Vālmīki in twenty-four thousand couplets. For ages, it has been held in many a Hindu home as the first and foremost poem to be recited with great veneration as part of one's religious duties performed daily. Later poets of India took the theme, as also the episodes from this classical epic, as the material for their compositions and admired in no small measure the greatness of this first and foremost poet. Thus we see that Bhavabhūti in his *Uttararāmacharita* (Act VI. 20) sings the glory of Vālmīki: 'Ah, what a form to make men's minds settle down in quietude! Indeed, the bard of the *Rāmāyaṇa* embellished (enriched) the sacred language through a personality, who is equally held sacred (divine).' Murāri Miśra, a poet who flourished between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries took fillip from Vālmīki and selected the theme for his inestimable Rāghava (*Anargha-Rāghava*), a seven act play. He says thus: 'Even if sages like Vālmīki and other poets have described Thee excellently, Oh, Rāma, it does in no way preclude me from making such an attempt' (Act I).

According to the accounts given in the *Tattvasaṅgraha Rāmāyaṇa*, this great soul that was to be Vālmīki was in earlier life a lost child (discarded by the parents). He was picked up by some mountebanks who trained him in the art of thieving. He soon became an adept in that art and waylaid many a traveller and pursued his business of plundering and killing, if such course was found expedient. One day, it so happened that the seven sages (*saptarṣis*) were passing through a jungle track when the marauder demanded them on pain of death all their belongings. Consequently, one of the sages advised the robber thus: 'As you have been committing sins for the maintenance of your family and children, go home and ascertain from your dependents if they are agreeable to become your copartners in the innumerable iniquities committed by you.' At these words of *dharma,* the cruel marauder was cooled down. He went home and consulted his people. They replied thus: 'As you are performing an obligatory duty as a householder in maintaining your children, wife, and relations, it is but necessary for you to bear the consequences thereof in the form of suffering, distress, and sin.'

The effects of association with the virtuous are always wonderful. Mere approach, touch, or conversation will, like the *bhramara kīta nyāya* (the maxim of the hornet and the insect), transform even the wicked into righteous persons. Vālmīki, the mountaineer, also perceived that there was a turning point in his life. In distress, he sought asylum with the ascetics and expressed his desire to get himself rid of all evil. Sage Vaśiṣṭa looked at the tranquil surroundings. To him, the entire forest as also the sylva appeared part and parcel of the supreme Spirit. By intuition, he saw everywhere the divine presence of Rāma, the Absolute. A sound was caused by the fall of the leaves which were scattered by the breeze of the gentle and soft zephyr. This sound was heard everywhere. In short, there was no other sound except the echo and the re-echo of the two syllables *ma* and *rā* (reversing the name 'Rāma') which pervaded even the spacial regions. The penitent mountebank with folded hands said to the sage thus: 'Oh great sage, now that the sound of the two syllables *marā* have been heard by you, I beseech you to kindly initiate me in them only, so that this sinner may get himself absolved.'

The sage Vaśiṣṭa fulfilled his request. The mountaineer entered into austerities reciting the *mantra* for many a year without break. He was completely absorbed in contemplation. Indra commissioned the celestial damsels to disturb his penance. But their efforts proved futile. Instead, they were also attracted by the sound of the divine name 'Rāma' (inverted) and they also participated in chanting that name and in indulging in a dance in ecstasy in the same manner as they did before Indra. As he remained unperturbed, the sage Vaśiṣṭa, at the instance of Bṛhaspati, came to the spot where the mountaineer was practising austerities. He observed the thick growth of shrubs around him who, besides, was completely covered by an ant-hill. The sage then said to him thus: 'Child, may fortune crown you. I am your preceptor. Get up from your penance. I have come to receive your hospitality.' Immediately, the emaciated form came out of the ant-hill and treated the sage with respect. At this juncture, Viṣṇu, the Lord of lords accompanied by Lakṣmī, gave him audience and blessed him thus: 'Let this devotee of mine, by virtue of his having issued from the *Valmīka* (ant-hill) be hereafter known as Vālmīki and attain the eminent position of a *brahmarṣi* (the Brāhmaṇical sage). Let his fame extend over the three worlds. Let the Goddess of speech dance at the tip of his tongue. Let his speech always become sweet and mellifluous. This clever-minded one (*mahāmati*) will be the author of the *Rāmāyaṇa.* When I descend down as Rāma, the Vedas will flow out from his lips in the form of the *Rāmāyaṇa,* every word of which will be efficacious in destroying all evil and sin.'

While Vālmīki was performing the daily ablutions on a certain day in his hermitage, he saw a fowler killing one of a pair of herons (*krauñca* birds). Filled with grief for the dead bird and sympathy for the bereaved one, the sage inflicted a curse on the wretch in words, which unconsciously took the form of a verse in the *anuṣṭubh* metre. At the divine command, the first poem was thus composed. This, in short, is the story of the genesis of poetry, the *Rāmāyaṇa* being the first book written in it.

Once, while all sages and ascetics (lovers of piety and duty) held a convention at Naimiṣāraṇya on the banks of the Gautamī and engaged themselves in discussions connected with the quest of Truth or Reality, in accordance with their own revelations and mystical experiences, this eminent sage of a Vālmīki entered into the assembly with his entourage singing the greatness of Rāma. To all those present, it looked as though he had immersed himself deep into the bliss of Rāma and had become one with Rāma Himself. Indirectly, this was a hint given to the sages, the solution to their problem to know that Rāma was the Reality. (Cf. *Tattvasaṅgraha Rāmāyaṇa Bāla-kāṇḍa*).

In the *Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa* of the same work quoted above, there is an interesting account of sage Vālmīki, to whose hermitage at Citrakūṭa, Rāma, accompanied by his spouse Sītā and brother Lakṣmaṇa, pays a visit. The sage entertains the Lord with fruits, bulbs, and edible nuts. Rāma asks the sage for a suitable place where he could stay with comfort for some time: 'If there should be a spot that could be pleasing to me, please tell me, so that I could fix it up as my dwelling.' The sage replies thus: 'Oh Lord, now that you have signified your intention to stay here with Sītā, I could only say this much. The hearts of those who are peaceful and even-minded, and are indifferent towards things mundane, being set up in meditation after Thee, would serve as fit places for your abode. The mind of one, who casts off all considerations of *dharma* or *adharma* and is continuously devoted in contemplation after Thee, would be an appropriate place for Thee. The mind of that devotee, who always takes pleasure in singing your glory and who seeks refuge in Thee alone, is unaffected by the pairs of opposites (comfort and distress) and is sincere, will always serve as your citadel. That great soul, who is free from ego, is serene, dispassionate, devoid of desire or hatred, and does not make any distinction between a lump of gold and a clod of earth, will always make a reservation for Thee in his mind. One who has surrendered his mind and intellect, as also his actions to Thee and remains always contented, would be the most worthy person to be frequented by Thy visits. The mind of one who does not feel distressed when he gets what is unpleasant, does not jubilate or rejoice when he is in favourable circumstances, but on the other hand, holds the view that all these conditions are illusory, would befittingly serve as your abode. Oh Lord, the Ocean of compassion, words fail me to describe your greatness. Even though your name was incorrectly repeated (in the inverted form), a sinner, like myself, was conferred a position of eminence (*brahmarṣitva*). Who is competent to describe your greatness? On considerations of love towards me, be pleased to stay with your spouse on this hillock of Citrakūṭa.'

Even today, tradition holds that Śrī Rāma has fixed His adode permanently at Citrakūṭa with a view to give audience and bless the devotees (canto 22).

When Sītā was abandoned by Rāma, sage Vālmīki gave her shelter under his roof and brought up her two sons. When Rāma was engaged in the solemn rite of the horse sacrifice, he was led to listen to the recitation of the poems, composed by Vālmīki, narrating the great deeds of Rāma, by the two gallant boys Lava and Kuśa. The great monarch was charmed and overwhelmed at what he had heard. On enquiry from the boys, when he came to know that the great Vālmīki was the composer of the poem and also their teacher, he, accompanied by his brothers, went to the sage and offered him the entire kingdom. Vālmīki, moved by the generosity of Rāma and full of sympathy for him, told him all about Sītā and requested him to accept her back, along with his own sons, Lava and Kuśa. To this, Rāma said: 'Venerable sir, though your daughter-in-law has proved her purity before us through the fire ordeal, these subjects have not yet shed their doubts regarding her stay at the home of the atrocious Rāvaṇa. I shall, therefore, obey your orders and accept Sītā, if only she does something to gain the confidence of the subjects.' Having got this consent from Rāma, the sage, at the appointed hour, brought Sītā before the monarch and his subjects and asked her to remove the doubts of the subjects in front of her husband. Sītā, who was clad in red and had her eyes fixed at her toes, looked the very embodiment of purity. She, without speaking a word, stepped forward to obey the orders of the sage, and taking the holy water from the hands of one of the disciples of Vālmīki, sipped a bit of it and solemnly said: 'If it be true that I have never, in thought, word, or deed, swerved from my duties as a devoted wife to my husband, then do thou, O mother Earth, take me to thy bosom and give peace to this ever-suffering daughter of thine.' Immediately, the earth opened and the goddess appeared on her shining snake throne. And, in spite of Rāma's protestations, she grasped Sītā in her arms and disappeared into the nether world (Cf. *Raghuvaṁsa*).

Vālmīki, the affectionate old man, must have been sad at it; but Vālmīki, the wise seer, must have laughed at this divine sport.

'Who will not attain the highest end by listening to the melody of the Rāma episode, sung by that great sage Vālmīki, who always roams about in the grove of poesy?'

THE YOGA AND THE PROBLEM OF KNOWLEDGE

By Professor Ramesh Chandra Shah

The problem of knowledge has been an eternal challenge to human psyche, and the wise men of all ages and climes have endeavoured to meet it in various ways. The East and the West have both tried to solve the enigma according to their own peculiar genius. It is now an established truth that all human activity is conditional and, to some extent, determined by the type of individual or racial mind. Thus, it has become a commonplace saying that the Indian mind is predominantly introvert while the Greek and the Western mind have evinced a markedly extrovert approach to life and knowledge. One need not be dogmatic on this point. Still the fact remains that the pursuit of knowledge has taken very different routes in Europe and Asia. It is usual in academic circles to characterize the Western attitude as life and world affirmation and the Indian attitude as life and world negation. This, obviously, is an over-simplification of the truth.

Hindu thought involves a profound acceptance of life at all levels, and if, on the one hand, it has soared highest into the realms of metaphysics, it has also evolved a highly elaborate and comprehensive ethical structure to meet the work-a-day problems of life. Indeed, what is too often held to be its weakness is its peculiar strength and glory. In its lofty speculative detachment and by its rigid insistence on psychic purity and self-submergence, it gave recognition to the highly mysterious and elusive nature of knowledge and realized the infinite difficulty of attaining to it. Indian tradition viewed philosophy or the love of knowledge as the surest measure of the worth and grandeur of human spirit.

What is this knowledge—this all absorbing preoccupation of the Indian mind? Is it a process or a result? If the former, how can we be ever sure of the validity of our perceptions? If it is the latter, in what can Reality be said to reside? How are we to reconcile the relative claims of objectivity and subjectivity? Here are some of the problems confronting man in his timeless quest for truth. What relation does the knower bear to the thing to be known? The emphasis of the West has been on the empirical and the objective. Socrates had put reason above all things else. He discovered the analytical method of exploring truths. The Socratic reason was something altogether higher, deeper, and subtler than what is commonly understood by the term intellect. Plato imbibed his master's inspired sense of the mystery of things. But later Western thought came to be dominated by Aristotelian logic and cold analysis. Materialistic theories of universe and knowledge developed side by side with less dogmatic and more subtle, yet incoherent, systems like those of Descartes and Kant.

The seers of India, on the other hand, reveal a rarer and intenser passion for unifying human experience. The three systems of Sāṅkhya, Vedānta and Pātañjala Yoga present human soul as a vehicle of divine light and power. Their special and distinctive disciplines seek to enlarge and enrich the same.

Amongst these three systems, that of Yoga is by far the most richly rewarding. Its basic tenet is that the profound knowledge is that which results from a damming up of all psychic activities, an inward turning. It maintains that the only sure and infallible means of knowing a thing is through contemplation. It calls for nothing less than a total immersion of the knowing consciousness in that experience. Only and solely in such a state of mind—where the knower almost becomes the thing to be known and loses the awareness of himself as a knowing agent—is perfect and flawless knowledge of the thing rendered possible. In the terminology of *yoga*, this is called *samāpatti* or *savikalpādi samādhi*. Under such trance-like states, the total available psychic energy operates on the subject and lays bare its whole meaning and significance. The *yogin*, alone, thus becomes the proud possessor of true knowledge—the real Enlightenment for which mere intellectuals or systematizers aspire in vain. All the speculative richness of Spinoza, Leibnitz, and Bergson appears diffuse and ambiguous before the powerful philosophy of Yoga.

However, the *yoga* aspirant has to pass through many stages of self-purification and austere practices before he can have his 'doors of perception' clear and ready to receive knowledge. As a matter of fact, our normal daily perception of things is quite hazy and distorted, because the perceiving mind is darkened and clogged by film after film of familiarity adhering to it. It has long ceased to retain its pristine state of purity. Now, the most important prerequisite of Yogic vision is the purification of our mind. The highly scientific and elaborate method which has been evolved to achieve this end is called *aṣṭāṅgayoga*, comprising eight practices of *yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna,* and *samādhi*. The Pātañjala-Yoga recognizes another five principles under *yama*, and five under *niyama*. The whole system is thus, in reality, a system of sixteen, and not eight disciplines—as the term '*aṣṭāṅgayoga*' would seem to convey. All these exercises have been designed to bring about a rejuvenation, a transformation of the whole man—body, heart, mind, and spirit alike. They constitute a ladder of spiritual aspiration, each step of which marks a distinct progress towards the final fulfilment. To have acquired any of these disciplines is to have a new source of psychic energy released within oneself and a new door of perception cleared for the admission of more 'light'. When the aspirant has mastered all these and reached the highest possible stage of purity, then the final state of '*samādhi*' comes to him.

In *samādhi* comes that state which is unperturbed by the 'opposites', and yields knowledge of the self and the Absolute Self.

To sum up, the philosophy of Yoga solves the problem of knowledge by placing its faith in the upward urging will of man, in its instinctive yearning towards the Holy, the Divine, and the Perfect. It seeks to exploit this deep-seated longing by certain disciplines of body, mind, and spirit. By means of these systematic and gradual sublimations, tremendous psychic energy is released from the Unconscious, which enables the aspirant to transcend his human limitations of the senses and intellect, and finally, attain to clear beatific visions and knowledge of Reality. The founders of modern psycho-analysis, too, have been deeply impressed by the teachings of Yoga. The great Carl Jung, for example—a devoted student of Indian religion and philosophy—has some fine things to say on this subject.

'Indian practice', Jung says, 'seeks to accomplish this state of damming of libido by systematically withdrawing the attention, alike from objects and from psychic states. This leads, inevitably, to a lowering of consciousness, whereby the unconscious contents, i.e. the primordial images which possess a cosmic and superhuman character on account of their universality and immense antiquity, become activated.'

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON MASS EDUCATION

By Sri Narayan Bose

In mass education, Swami Vivekananda was concerned with the development of the individual in society. He was in this regard quite consistent with his social interpretation of the Vedānta. To him, man is potentially divine; so the individuality of man is to be respected. According to Swami Vivekananda, we should have an education which is meant to give strength of character, and which helps development of will-power and expansion of intellect. His travels in India and abroad convinced him that such an education can only be possible if we pay proper attention to the relationship between the teacher and the taught and the use of correct methods in educational work.

In this matter, he exhorted his countrymen to have a feeling for the people and a knowledge of their needs first, and then, try to inform them with the affairs of the world around. Education, to him, appeared to be the most cogent medium of developing man. He said that in Western countries the people have risen to their present social and economic awareness only through education. In India, also, if people's lot is to be improved, it is education that should answer the need of the moment. But what kind of education would this be? He said that this would be the education for the betterment of the common man.

In this connection, he said that man should be given ideas along with the gifts of their cultural heritage. But he, at the same time, was duly conscious of the need of scientific knowledge in the present technological age and clearly stated that education should have to enable a person to stand on his own feet. Here we find Swami Vivekananda strongly supporting an educational method which can arouse confidence in the individual. At the same time, he said that education should reach the common man also. This can be better expressed in his own words: 'By telling stories about different nations, they can give the poor a hundred times more information through the ear than they can get in a life time through books. Kindle their knowledge with the help of modern science. Teach them history, geography, science, literature, and along with them, the profound truths of religion through these.'

Thus he was in favour of audio-visual aid as a means to education. He realized that until and unless the masses are educated, and their economic condition improved, there cannot be real welfare of the nation. Today, quite in tune with the ideas of Swami Vivekananda, we see throughout India quite a number of educational endeavours which aim at the development of the individual in a changing society. While endorsing the basic objectives of Swami Vivekananda's ideas of man-making education, the point of emphasis given by these educational efforts rests on social solidarity and levelling up of economic conditions. In social education, fundamental education, and workers' education, we have the clear perspective of man-making training, though they do make a marked departure from the ideals of education preached by Swami Vivekananda, inasmuch as he wanted all education to be put on the basic foundation of spirituality.

The necessity of this kind of educational concept can be understood if we examine the changing scene of Asian conditions in the course of the last decade. Since the time the last world war ended and Asian countries got freedom, we find a widespread surge of nationalist spirit and various efforts towards educational reconstruction. Although democratic governments have been installed in these countries, the soul of democracy cries under the pressure of various autocratic trends. Consequently disruptive forces have been released on the Asian scene making the life of the common man miserably unhappy. In the context of this state of affairs, it is essential that education is pitched on the ideal of releasing genuine democratic forces. In Asian countries, if democracy is to be stabilized and its influence spread through educational reconstruction, efforts should be so geared up as to build up self-confidence in the people, based on balanced human relationship.

In this task, the teacher, as Swami Vivekananda points out, has a great role to play. The teacher shall have to understand the needs of the taught and give him help in guiding his activities. *Gurugṛhavāsa,* according to Swami Vivekananda, can help a lot in this regard. In this system of education, the teacher and the taught live together and the information and knowledge that are imparted by the teacher go deep into the mind of the student and help his desired development. In these days of educational planning, we can profitably derive useful lessons from the educational scheme envisaged by Swami Vivekananda. He said: 'The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow. The man who influences, who throws his magic, as it were, upon his fellow beings, is a dynamo of power, and when that man is ready, he can do anything and everything he likes; that personality put upon anything will make it work.'

Opening of adequate opportunities has been suggested in these pregnant words for the development of human personality. Personality development was the centre of attention in the ancient system of education in the East and the West, particularly in Plato. But that was exclusively meant to create a special class of people who could rule over others by dint of their superior intelligence. But today, mass education has taken the place of class education, obviously to mean that the common man should intelligently participate in the affairs of the country.

Looked at intensively, we find that a co-operative system of education with due emphasis on the character-building of the teacher, for transmission of knowledge into the taught, has been held out by Swami Vivekananda as a practical way of mass education. But the awakening of spirituality in society was to be preceded by elaborate arrangements of secular education in order to prepare the people for a better standard of life. Spirituality in social matters should mean the development of the spirit of fellow-feeling, sympathy, understanding, and sharing of common problems between people themselves. He thought, therefore, that even this secular education should be imparted through religion only, for it was only through religion that these noble traits of character could be developed and the efforts for political or social advancement could take firm roots in India.

Here, religion is understood to be the cultivation of virtues through self-control and canalization of man's potentialities. Every form of human behaviour, even secular, must be an ethical pursuit of life for the consummation of Dharma, the code of behaviour in India's age-long tradition and culture.

Swami Vivekananda said: 'I only ask you to work to realize more and more the Vedāntic ideal of the solidarity of man and his inborn nature. These conceptions of the Vedānta must come out from the forest and the cave, they must come out to work at the bar and the bench, in the pulpit and in the cottage of the poor man, with the fishermen that are catching fish, and with students that are studying. If the fisherman thinks that he is the Spirit he will be better fisherman, if the student thinks that he is the Spirit, he will be better student, and so on. And that is what we want, no privilege for any one, equal chances for all.' Today, our educational workers and social thinkers should attempt to introduce this grand Vedāntic spirit in education, in social reform movements, and in democratic institutions, all of which are meant to improve the lot of the common man and strengthen the nation. In this, mass education has an important role to play. Swami Vivekananda, again and again, emphatically said that our country will advance in proportion to the spread of education and the development of intelligence among the masses. Swami Vivekananda's concept of mass education is a strong case for development of courage, fearlessness, and physical stamina to face the problems of life. It should also endow us with a synthetic outlook and consciousness of fundamental unity of man. That is the need of the hour. In its last analysis, education should go to the common man with the world of gifts it has to offer, namely, the gift of spirituality, the gift of secular knowledge, and the gift of food. That is the living image of Swami Vivekananda's concept of mass education.

THE ROLE OF FAITH IN PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

By Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao

Human life needs a faith to live by, and without it, life has no meaning or peace. Inner peace and harmony are impossible without the integration of one's personality. If man has to grow to his full stature, he must avoid and overcome the inner conflict and the attrition resulting from the environment and the age in which he lives. To secure this end, he needs a living rational faith. Whether we like it or not, we are all children of science and reason. We are also aware of the serious limitations of science and its power as the absolute instruments for man's progress. Science gives us the mechanics of life. But life is not pure mechanism. Knowledge and power are not ends in themselves. They must become means to a higher end. They must be grounded in love and the good life. The ends of knowledge and power are beyond the truth of knowledge and the naked glory of power. The ends are the values of life, are the outcome of human faith.

In the words of William James, our moral and religious values are erected as hypotheses, not absolutely clear nor on sufficient evidence. They are the acts of belief or faith.

We have the robust assurance that good life, in the long run, provides the deepest and most lasting satisfaction for us. This is an act of faith in the moral value. We have the unconquerable hope that, when we struggle for a right cause, God's hands will reach out to us and bring us success.

Faith is the belief in a chosen way of life. It is an attitude of mind that brings relief to man's mind. It makes life smooth sailing. 'The man who has no faith, who is ignorant, and who doubts everything perishes', says the *Gītā* (IV.40). Faith is hidden in man. All have it in them. It is a specific form of religious reason. It is essentially intuitive, and not assumptive. It is that certain knowledge of ultimate Reality which cannot justify itself under scientific criticism. 'Faith is the inner sense of truth.' The *Gītā* describes that the nature of a man is determined by the nature of his faith. 'Man is of the nature of his faith; what his faith is, that verily, he is' (XVII.3). Plato observes: 'Such as are the trends of our desires and the nature of our souls, just such each of us become' (*Laws,* 904 c). The German writer Goethe writes: 'Earnestness alone makes for eternity.' Referring to the nature of faith, Tagore observes: 'It is the birds' song of the dawn in the thick night.'

Faith enables us to step out of, and break from, what is purely empirical. It releases us from the tyranny of the world of things in space and time.

By faith, we do not mean the swallowing of a body of doctrines to save ourselves the trouble of thinking. The doctrines must burn themselves into us and must not merely be repeated parrot-like. Faith accepts things with the assent of the entire being. It is not a conditional, partial, or hesitant acceptance of things. Faith is the result of our authentic personal experience, arising from our unique intense personal striving. It is not a blind adherence or a blank acceptance. It has its own logic. Pascal declared: 'The heart has its own logic which the head knows not.' Faith is not blind; it looks at all current creeds and enquires into things with the strength of its entire of being. 'Faith is the precondition of all systematic knowing, all purposive doing, and decent living.' Faith is a powerful sentiment. It keeps us away and gives us the strength to fight all the temptations that assail us.

Faith moves mountains. It alone inspires the inextinguishable hope and the feeling of the certainty of the victory of the ideal, even in the most forlorn stage of our fight. It does not give quarter to despair. It shuns sloth. Faith feels that there is cosmic backing for its cause. Faith assures us that a righteous cause is ordained to be victorious. Faith is not a vague attitude to things. Faith requires strength to believe. Faith is not a superstition for rationalists and agnostics to laugh at us. It is a tower of strength. The wise psychiatrist Erich Fromm writes that man cannot live without faith; he says: 'Can man live without faith? Must not the nursling have faith in the mother's breast? Must we all not have faith in our fellowmen; in those whom we love and in ourselves? Can we live without faith in the validity of our life? Indeed, without faith, man becomes sterile, hopeless, and afraid to the very core of his being' (*Man for Himself,* p. 198). Jesus, speaking about the power of faith, told his disciples: 'If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, "Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea", it shall be done. And all this, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive.'

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE NEW YEAR

With this issue, ***Prabuddha Bharata*** enters the sixty-eighth year of its useful existence. Started in 1896 with the blessings of Swami Vivekananda, whose birth centenary celebrations will be observed this year throughout the world, this journal has ever since been contributing its humble quota towards the realization of that 'Awakened India'—whose glorious vision the great Swami had seen and whose consummation, he thought, would not only make India 'greater than ever she was', but also would help humanity at large to make for a better social order and a richer life of spirit. On this occasion, we take the opportunity to remember with gratitude all who have helped us during these long years and thank those kind friends who are helping us now.

This year comes to us in the midst of a national crisis. Our beloved motherland is in the grip of a grim struggle for defending itself against the unwarranted and barbarous invasion of its northern borders by a ruthless neighbour, whose welfare and friendship India had always sought with its characteristic earnestness and affection. None could think that this peaceful country, which has never looked beyond its borders with the slightest of greed, through the thousands of years of its history, should have to face such an emergency. But God's ways are inscrutable, and events do not always happen to one's liking. In the face, therefore, of this grim reality that stares at us, we only pray to God to give us strength and courage to do all that can be done and to make the supreme sacrifice that would be needed to hold aloft the banner of our hard-won freedom and save the honour of our dear motherland. May God grant us success and may that peace and prosperity come to humanity, for which India has always tried and for which it is even now trying.

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TO OUR READERS

From this month, we have the privilege to start publishing the 'Spiritual Discourses of Swami Vijnanananda', which, we believe, will be found as revealing and beneficial as the the 'Spiritual Talks of Swami Shivananda', published during the last three years. We are thankful to Swami Apurvananda of the Ramakrishna Order for compiling these discourses, and also, translating them into English. . . .

The *Durgā Saptaśatī,* commonly known as *Śrī Caṇḍī,* which forms a part of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa,* is as honoured and adored as the *Gītā* by the Hindus, specially by the followers of Tantra. It is the 'Supreme Mother'—the all-powerful deity, creating, preserving, and ultimately destroying the entire creation—whose glory is sung in this book. Professor Batuknath Bhattacharya, M.A., formerly of Surendranath College, Calcutta, treats beautifully the exploits of the 'Mother Goddess', as described in the *Saptaśatī,* and explains the nature of the Divine Mother and her cosmic sports. This nice article is as interesting as it is helpful in understanding the deeper meaning of the text of the *Saptaśatī.* . . .

'The Vedānta and Its Fundamentals' is the text of a talk by Swami Ranganathananda, a senior member of the Ramakrishna Order. The talk was broadcasted over the Delhi Radio. In it, he deals with the history of the growth of the Vedāntic thought in India, and shows how it holds a great message of hope and courage for the bewildered human society of the modern times. . . .

Dr. S. N. L. Srivastava, M.A., D.Litt., Head of the Department of Philosophy, Vikram University, Ujjain, with whom our readers are acquainted, writes in this month on 'The Dynamic Ethics of John Dewey'. This learned article clearly brings out the new approach to the understanding of human values, as advocated by the famous American educationist, who has, as it were, brought about a revolution in the philosophy and psychology of education. We hope the article will be read with interest and benefit by our readers. ...

Sri M. V. Sridatta Sarma, M.A., of Mysore, writes about 'Sage Vālmīki', collecting his data about the great poet from the very meagre sources available. He has based his study mainly on the accounts of the sage in the *Tattvasaṅgraha Rāmāyaṇa*, which is more popular in South India than in the North. The account, though short, will be found interesting and informative. ...

'The Yoga and the Problem of Knowledge' is from the pen of Professor Ramesh Chandra Shah of Bhopal, one of our new contributors. He says in his article that the Indian system of Yoga, through a process of sublimation, enables the aspirant to transcend his human limitations of the senses and the intellect and helps him to attain the knowledge of Reality. ...

Swami Vivekananda laid great stress on the necessity of the spread of education among the common people. According to him, the cure for many of the evils with which we suffer could be found in the propagation of the right type of education on a popular scale. Sri Narayan Bose, of the Ramakrishna Mission Social Education Organizers' Training Centre, Belur, discusses in brief the ideas that Swamiji held in regard to mass education. ...

In his article, Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao, M.A., D.Litt., of Karnatak College, Dharwar, writes about 'The Role of Faith in Religion and Philosophy', as a matter of fact, in human life itself. He says: 'Faith enables us to step out of, and break from, what is purely empirical. It releases us from the tyranny of the world of things in space and time. ... It is a tower of strength.'

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

MY NON-VIOLENCE. Compiled and Edited by Sailesh Kumar Bandopadhyaya. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14. 1960. Pages 373. Price Rs. 5.*

This is a compilation of the speeches and writings of Gandhiji during 1921-48 on the subject of non-violence and its application at various times. It makes inspiring reading, and one has to agree with the editor that the Navajivan Publishing House has rendered a unique service to the cause of non-violence by publishing this valuable book.

Ahiṁsā has had various interpretations and applications even before Gandhiji, and each of those interpretations are valuable to humanity. The great Buddha, Lord Kṛṣṇa, and Lord Mahāvīra were all votaries of non-violence, and each of them as successfully revolutionized the thinking of the times as Gandhiji has done in his own. Each of them gave an inspiring message to the world, torn by violence, and awakened the conscience of the millions against the prevailing practice. Our ancient history is not very clear to the editor, who holds that before Gandhiji, saints practised it for individual *mokṣa*. But the value of this book lies not so much in its presentation of history, nor even in the various applications of *ahiṁsā* in different, and often trying, situations, although to the devotee of personalities, this is its only, and perhaps, the greatest use. Its value lies in that echo of inspiration in the heart of the readers, which dominated Gandhiji all through his life. If one goes through his speeches and writings, one is filled with admiration for the man who bore no ill-will against his opponent and yet fought them firmly and unflinchingly for the cause that he held right. He viewed non-violence as a conscious suffering and taught us not to submit to the will of the evil-doer.

He had an indomitable will to fight against what he considered to be evil, and he fought according to the laws of suffering and self-sacrifice, so that he could quicken the conscience of the people and make them rise. He considered the then existing system of Government to be wholly bad and requiring special national effort to end or to mend it; and it must be admitted to his credit that he was able to do it and achieve his objective.

Never was his gospel of non-violence put to as severe a test as in his last days. Communal riots broke out in India. He had no answer to give to the Muslim friends who saw him from day to day to enquire as to what they should do. He exhorted people to curb their anger but no one listened. A challenge was thrown at him, and he resolved to undertake a fast to awaken the people to their duty and to cool contemplation. Communal frenzy did die down, and the innate goodness of the common man asserted itself. But the disgruntled believers in communal discord took his life. The grand old man died fighting.

It is not possible for everyone to accept every word of his. Even his best disciples have differed from time to time. There are Bolsheviks who will not see eye to eye with him on his interpretation of class struggle and social revolution. They do not have the belief that they are citizens of this great empire of capital, and rather think that they are pariahs or untouchables. They will prescribe the same special national effort to end or mend this wholly bad social system and will claim a socialist revolution to be the supreme expression of non-violent action. Yet even they will draw inspiration from this book and fill themselves with the same unselfish urge for action and indomitable will to fight and suffer as Gandhiji had. Devotees will find more. They will find application of the doctrine of *ahiṁsā* useful in all circumstances.

It is no use having devotees of this great votary of non-violence, ready with quotations for every odd situation, standing in awe and wonder at his achievements, and yet standing apart. We need men of action who can fill his place, even if their interpretation of non-violence is as original as his has been. We need men who cannot be accused of bearing ill-will or malice even against opponents, and yet who are as firm and unflinching as Gandhiji was. If the speeches and the writings of Gandhiji, as compiled in this small and cheap edition, can inspire even one man to the path of righteousness, the editor and the publisher will be amply rewarded. We wish the book a very wide reading.

Raj Narain Arya

FRENCH

QUESTE DU SACRE. By Swami Nityabodhananda. *Published by La Colombe, Éditions du Vieux Colombier. 5 rue Rousselet, 5 Paris. 1962. Pages 145. Price 8nf.*

The title of the book means 'Quest of the Sacred'. Its nine chapters present a lucid exposition of the true nature of the Sacred and the quest for it, which is equally helpful to scholars and laymen.

Beginning with 'On Anguish and the Sacred', the author passes on to 'The Religious and Extra-Religious Sense of the Sacred in the Vedānta'. Anguish prevents the realization of the Sacred. Our mistaken division of life into life and death is 'a treason against the dynamism of life'. Vedānta regards man as sacred. But our egotistic thoughts and acts 'break the unity of the Cosmic Will' and take us away from the Sacred.

'The Sacred in Buddhism' is an illuminating chapter. It tells how, even without admitting the existence of God, soul, or Self, the Buddha put the greatest emphasis on 'sacredness' and accomplished a 'holy revolution' through 'love and knowledge'.

The chapter entitled 'The Sacred—the Base of Hindu Religion' is an eloquent plea for realizing the 'Sacred in our heart and in our interiority' by treating man as an 'integral unity'.

'The Search of the Sacred by the Practice of Truth: Sri Rāma'—this chapter insists that the practice of truth more than anything else brings out the Sacred in us.

The chapter on 'The Search of the Sacred by the Practice of Non-Violence: Mahatma Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave' shows the great powers of non-violence, a creed for the really strong and not for the weak.

In 'The Search of the Sacred according to Sri Ramana Maharshi and Sri Aurobindo', the author shows that, for the former, the best *sādhanā* was to be 'in the normal state'; whereas Sri Aurobindo's philosophy is a 'synthesis of Viśiṣṭādvaita, Śāktaism, and Yoga'.

The chapter, 'Ignorance which separates us from the Sacred', extends the hope that 'at the heart of positive ignorance' or Māyā, is Brahman, who, by destroying ignorance, will help us ultimately to realize the Sacred.

The last chapter is 'The Search of the Sacred in the Forms'. Having discussed the '*Śrī-yantra*' and the significance of forms, the author ends the book with the prayer of the devotee that he may adore God 'without the help of any form', but solely with his intuition.

We congratulate Swami Nityabodhananda for this thought-provoking and remarkable work and wholeheartedly recommend it to the public and the scholarly world.

Dr. P. N. Mukherjee

SANSKRIT

ŚAKTI SĀRADAM (A Drama). By Dr. J. B. Chaudhuri. *Published by Prachya Vani Mandir, 3 Federation Street, Calcutta-9. Price not mentioned.*

Śakti Sāradam is one of the few dramas written in easy Sanskrit by Dr. J. B. Chaudhuri. The theme of the drama deals with some of the incidents in the life of Sri Sarada Devi, the holy consort of Sri Ramakrishna. The language is easy and can be followed by even those who do not know Sanskrit very well. The dramatic technique is also good, as this drama, like some others by Dr. Chaudhuri, has been successfully staged in many parts of India, and such performances have been highly appreciated by the scholars and the spectators. Dr. Chaudhuri's efforts towards popularization of Sanskrit through his Prachya Vani Mandir's activities, specially by staging of such Sanskrit dramas as the one under review, are praiseworthy. We wish that *Śakti Sāradam* is read by Sanskrit loving people and staged publicly oftener than now, to make the people Sanskrit-minded and thus help in the advancement and the study of Sanskrit. We heartily commend Dr. Chaudhuri's painstaking efforts in this laudable direction.

S. C.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATION

The celebrations in connection with the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda will be inaugurated at the Belur Math, headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, on 17th January 1963, the 101st birthday of the Swami, and will be observed, throughout the year until the next birthday, in different centres of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in India and abroad, as well as in different colleges, schools, and other institutions in the country.

To organize the Centenary all over the world in a befitting manner, a Central Celebration Committee was formed at Calcutta, with the most eminent men of the East and the West as its members. The Committee has drawn up a comprehensive scheme which includes publication, preaching, permanent memorial, procession, exhibition, different kinds of conferences, etc., with an estimated cost of about rupees fifty lakhs.

Publications:

(i) A Memorial Volume on 'Swami Vivekananda's Contribution to World-thought', with an introductory chapter on 'India's Influence on the Thought and Culture of the World through the Ages'.

(ii) Graded literature on the Swami's life and teachings, suited to different educational levels of the reading public.

(iii) The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda are being translated in nine different languages of India, namely, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Tamil, and Telugu. All these, and a cheaper edition of the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* in English, are being published during the Centenary year by the different centres of the Ramakrishna Math.

(iv) The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, will publish an album of Swami Vivekananda on this occasion; the materials will be supplied by the Centenary Committee.

(v) The Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting will produce a documentary film on the life of Swami Vivekananda. The Centenary Committee has supplied them with a synopsis.

(vi) The Ministry of Transport and Communication will print postal stamps with the autographed pictures of Swami Vivekananda in two different postures.

Permanent Memorials:

(i) To take necessary steps for the preservation of the ancestral house and the birth place of the Swami and the conversion of the same into a suitable memorial.

(ii) To found Swami Vivekananda Lectureships in universities, and other learned societies.

Conventions and Conferences:

(i) A Convention at the Belur Math of the *sañnyāsins* and *brahmacārins* of the Ramakrishna Order and lay members and associates of the Mission, to which admirers of Sri Ramakrishna and sympathizers of the Mission will also be invited.

(ii) A Parliament of Religions and a Parliament of Man in Calcutta, in which the people of different faiths from different parts of the world will participate.

(ii) A Conference of women devotees and admirers in Calcutta and at other places.

(iv) All India Students' Conference in Calcutta.

(v) All India Classical and Devotional Music Conference in Calcutta.

Exhibition:

To hold a cultural exhibition with special emphasis on the life and works of Swami Vivekananda.

Pilgrimage and Procession:

(i) To undertake pilgrimages to important places associated with the Swami.

(ii) To organize processions on this occasion.

Miscellaneous:

(i) Medallions of Swami Vivekananda.

(ii) With the help of the State Governments, the Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation has decided to organize the Centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda in all the five and a half lakhs villages of the Indian Union.

(iii) Under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, London, Centenary Celebrations will be held in the principal cities of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. Besides the erection of an auditorium, altar, and an Ashrama, for which the sum of £1,00,000 has been received from a donor, there will be essay competitions, foundation of a lectureship at the London University, publication of books and leaflets in English and other languages, a convention of religions, etc., during the Centenary year.

(iv) The Centenary celebration will be held in all the foreign Centres of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission and in the following countries by the devotees and admirers of the Swami: Berlin, Belgium, France, Holland, Italy, Japan, Poland, Rumania, Spain, Switzerland, U.S.S.R., and in some parts of Africa and Australia.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVIII FEBRUARY 1963 No. 2

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—:o:—

Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION

Sisters and Brothers of the East and the West,

Please allow me to extend to you all my hearty greetings and good wishes on this historic occasion of the first birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda. His earthly career was a brief one, but it was packed with epoch-making spiritual realizations and their wide diffusion in the East and the West alike.

In his youth, sitting at Dakshineswar, at the feet of his great Master, Sri Ramakrishna, who was the fulfilment of the aspirations of humanity of all ages and climes, he had imbibed the spirit of universality through the realization of the Divine in man. So, though he was born in India, he belonged to the whole world, and India had no exclusive claims on him. His mission in the East and the West was to rouse men and women to an awareness of their divine nature and the unity of man, which alone can bring peace to this world torn with hatred and strife. To quote his own words: 'Doubtless I do love India. But every day my sight grows clearer. What is India or England or America to us? We are the servants of that God who by the ignorant is called man.

'There is but one basis of well-being, social, political or spiritual—to know that I and my brother are *one*. This is true for all countries and all people.'

In his comprehensive message, science and religion, reason and faith, the secular and the sacred, the modern and the ancient, and the East and the West became unified, and he himself was the personification of that union. His life and message have given the necessary impetus for the ushering in of a new era in the history of the civilization of man.

To his countrymen, he sounded the clarion call to be up and doing: 'Work, work, for the future of India depends on that.' He exhorted them to cast off all petty jealousies and to rally round the great ideal of 'unity in diversity', inherited by them from hoary antiquity. On this principle, he advised them to build up a great nation out of India's divergent races with divergent languages and customs, which, though a slow process, would yet give lasting results, and to refrain from using force to attain quick and spectacular results, which would be short-lived. Weld the variety into a unity, he said, without destroying anything, for such destruction will make the nation so much the weaker and poorer. He asked his countrymen to look with pride on what the nation had attained in the past, and have faith in the future destiny of their motherland. 'I am one of the proudest men ever born,' he says, 'it is not for myself, but on account of my ancestry. It has given me strength . . . raised me from the dust of the earth . . . may you have the same pride.' Referring to the future of India, he said: 'There she is walking with her own majestic steps—my motherland—to fulfil her glorious destiny, which no power on earth can check'; 'Up, up, the long night is passing away, and the day is approaching; the wave has risen, nothing will be able to resist its tidal fury'; 'never is she going to sleep any more, no outward powers can hold her back any more, for the infinite giant is rising to her feet.' He exhorted them to have faith in themselves, to give up lethargy, and to work hard to build the future India. 'Have faith in yourself,' he said, 'otherwise there is no salvation; have faith and be strong, that is what we need'; 'Call upon the sleeping soul and see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come, and everything that is excellent will come'; 'No great work can be done without sacrifice . . . lay down your comforts, your pleasures, your name, fame, or position, nay, even your lives'; 'What our country wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which will accomplish their purpose in any form, even if it meant meeting death face to face.' 'Thou brave one, . . . proudly proclaim, "I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother, . . . the soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good", and repeat and pray day and night, "O Thou Lord of Gaurī, O Thou Mother of the Universe, vouchsafe manliness unto me, . . . make me a MAN!"'

This message of strength, faith, energy, and solidarity is specially needed today in our present crisis.

The Centenary year will witness the reverberation of his thoughts, which will be a perennial source of creative spiritual education for man, endowing him with a vision and the resolve to bring about unity, harmony, and fellowship between man and man and nation and nation.

May the spirit of the great Swami, who awakened India and united the East and the West, inspire us all to live and work to this end in the light of the life-giving motto: '*Ātmano mokṣārthaṁ jagaddhitāya ca*—For one's own liberation and welfare of the world'!

Belur Math
January 17, 1963

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA
President
Ramakrishna Math and Mission

THE INAUGURAL SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA

[The Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary celebrations were formally inaugurated by Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, President of India, at a public meeting held at the Deshapriya Park, Calcutta, on Sunday, the 20th January 1963. The meeting was attended by nearly 2 lakhs of people. The following is the full text of the speech delivered by Dr. Radhakrishnan on the occasion.]

I am very delighted to be here this evening and inaugurate the birth centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda. This city of Calcutta has produced many men of genius in education, science, literature, and spiritual endeavour, and the greatest of them all is Swami Vivekananda. He embodied the spirit of this country. He was a symbol of her spiritual aspirations and fulfilment. It is that spirit which was expressed in the songs of our devotees, the philosophies of our seers, the prayers of our common people. He gave articulation and voice to that eternal spirit of India.

Many of us are content to look upon the greatness which he had achieved. But it is more interesting to know the way by which he attained that greatness, the hard difficulties which he had to encounter and surmount, the exercises which he had to undertake, the way in which he transmuted his intractable nature to the purpose of the Divine. That, also, has some interest to the pilgrims, to the stragglers, to workers who wish to attain some kind of lesson in spiritual life.

He was born here, educated in one of the institutions here, studied the works which were then popular in his time—of John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, David Hume, was disturbed in his mind, tried to discover the way to Truth, went hither and thither, was tossed about till at last he met Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. The impact of his personality, the sincerity of his conviction, his passionate love of God made a remarkable change in the life and work of Swami Vivekananda. When he was disputing with philosophers and dialecticians, when he was attending many *samājas* which professed to declare Truth, he went to him and asked, 'Have you seen God?' And the answer came: 'Yes, I have seen Him even as I see you, only more clearly, more intensely.' He was not arguing, he was not making guesses, he spoke from his personal experience and declared that he felt the reality of God in his own life, in the pulse of his being, and was face to face with Him almost all his life. That made a profound change in the life of Swami Vivekananda. It is the tradition of our country that religion does not consist in arguments and speculations. *Na medhayā na bahunā śrutena*—not by brain power or study of many texts, but we have to see the Supreme face to face. The Ṛg-Veda tells us: *'Sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ.' Paśyanti*, they see constantly the highest dwelling place of the Divine. So says the Upaniṣad: *'Vedāhametaṁ puruṣaṁ mahāntaṁ ādityavarṇaṁ tamasaḥ parastāt.'* Don't be deluded by the glamour of this world, by the darkness of this world, beyond it is a diety. He is the Supreme. It is something which is to be felt, which is to be realized, which is to be experienced. That is the lesson of India. India never counted on dogmas, doctrines etc. They were instruments, they were means for the purpose of realizing the highest kind of truth. It is true that the Divine is in each of us, but the splendour is imprisoned. There are so many opaque things shutting it out from expression, from manifestation. It requires a good deal of spiritual meditation, austerity, if you wish to manifest the Divine which is in you. Therefore, it costs a great deal. Religion is not a thing which we can acquire by simply reading books. It is a thing which can be acquired by the wastage of your whole nature by going through enormous difficulties and transforming yourself. He passed through all that, and attained to the sensing of the mystery of this world.

When once we recognize that the Reality is something to be felt, something to be experienced, you do not attach so much importance to the ways by which you attain it. They become subordinate. They become instrumental. And in that great utterance of his in September 1893 in the Chicago Parliament of Religions, what he said was there is a God above all gods, there is a religion above all religions, there is something which supersedes all our religiosities, all our pieties, rituals, dogmas, doctrines, etc., and that is the religion on the basis of which the whole world, East and West, could be united.

He quoted that famous verse of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* in that audience: *'Ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tān tathaiva bhajāmyahaṁ, Mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ.'* Even as men approach Me, so do I accept them. All men are trying to seek Me, to find Me, and therefore, I don't make any differences between the pathways and the addresses and the approaches adopted by them. I know their seeking, their earnest endeavour, the way in which they are passing through turmoil to reach the Supreme. Therefore it matters little for me by which way they attain Me. It is that which he said. He declared it in the Parliament of Religions, the voice of eternal India, the voice of universal religion, the voice which says there is one God above all gods. *'Devānāṁ ādideva ekaḥ'*, says the Ṛg-Veda. And the same scripture tells us that there are many ways in which that Reality is described by human beings. It is therefore essential for us to be tolerant, to be understanding. At a time when our country was lost in dogmatic controversies, when religious people were fighting one with another, became sectarian, became dogmatic, became exclusive, he emphasized that you are all fools, you do not know what the ultimate Truth is. You must get rid of all these prejudices and prepossessions and believe that the one universal God belongs to all religions, is found in all religions, and everyone is trying to seek the pathway to that eternal Supreme.

As in the life of the Buddha, there was in the life of Swami Vivekananda a moment when he thought that he should lose himself in the delights of inner life, in the delights of contemplation and not get back into the world. But Ramakrishna told him: 'Shame on you! Why are you trying so much to seek your own personal salvation?' *'Śivamātmani paśyanti'*, the Supreme is in every human being. All these are to be regarded as embodiments of the Supreme. We should realize that the name given to him, Narendra Nath, was not a mere accident. He was the embodiment of *nara*, of the human beings. *'Nārāyaṇaṁ narasakhaṁ śaraṇaṁ prapadye.'* *Narasakha* is Nārāyaṇa. He felt the pangs of all human beings, and he wanted that every human being should live, should live a decent life. Most of us exist, but do not live. He wanted every one of us to acquire strength, beauty, power, dignity, and be a truly human being. We are not that. He looked at the misery of our country. He looked at the millions who died of poverty and hunger, and he said: I am the worshipper of Daridra Nārāyaṇa, of the Nārāyaṇa who is located in all the poor people of this world. So long as they are there, how can I content myself with my own salvation or with my own beatitude? It is my duty to look after them all. The best way to reach God is by the service of man.

He inculcated a religion of patriotism—not patriotism in the narrow sense of the word, patriotism as the religion of humanity. His was a religion which called upon us to look upon all human beings as kindred, as belonging to one family. That is the kind of religion which he taught us and which he adopted. He said 'it is a man-making religion'. It is a humanistic religion. There is no divorce between contemplative life and social service. The two things are expressions of one and the same kind of phenomenon. If we have reached the Supreme and felt the reality of God in our own minds and thoughts, it would be our duty to come to the rescue of all people who are suffering in this world. A call to suffer was a thing which we should heed. Therefore he said: I suffer. I suffer anguish when I look at the misery of my country, when I look at the poor millions dying like flies for lack of food, sustenance etc. Even Bhagavān takes pity: *'Bhagavān anukrośamanubhavati'*—He feels a kind of pity, a kind of compassion, when He sees how the people, in whom the divine spark is located, are not able to develop that spark and make it into a splendour, make it into a flame. That is why we are here. We are here for the purpose of fulfilling ourselves, and that kind of fulfilment does not consist merely in the accumulation of wealth, or name and fame, or possessions etc. It consists in completing yourself, in your making yourself a symbol or an image of the Divine which dwells in you. It is that kind of humanistic, man-making religion which gave us courage in the days when we were all young. As a student in one of the classes, in Matriculation or so, the letters of Sri Vivekananda used to be circulated in manuscript form among us all. The kind of thrill which we enjoyed, the kind of mesmeric touch that those writings gave us, the kind of reliance in our own culture which was being criticized all around—it is that kind of transformation which his writings effected in the young men in the early years of this century. In Madras it was so. I have no doubt it would have been so in other parts of the country also.

We are today at a critical period not merely in the history of our country but in the history of the world. There are many people who think we are on the edge of an abyss. There is distortion of values, there is lowering of standards, there is wide-spread escapism, a good deal of mass hysteria, and people think of it and collapse in despair, frustration, hopelessness. These are the only things which are open to us. Such a kind of lack of faith in the spirit of man is a treason to the dignity of man. It is an insult to human nature. It is human nature that has brought about all the great changes that have taken place in this world. And if there is any call which Vivekananda made to us, it is to rely on our own spiritual resources. Say that man has inexhaustible spiritual resources. His spirit is supreme, man is unique. There is nothing inevitable in this world, and we can ward off the worst dangers and worst disabilities by which we are faced. Only we should not lose hope. He gave us fortitude in suffering, he gave us hope in distress, he gave us courage in despair. He told us: Don't be led away by the appearances. Deep down there is a providential will, there is a purpose in this universe. You must try to co-operate with that purpose and try to achieve it. Renunciation, courage, service, discipline—these are the mottoes which we can learn from his life. There was a time when Sri Ramakrishna marked him out for leadership. The last words which he uttered to any of his disciples were to Swami Vivekananda: 'Take care of these boys.' Many were older than himself. But the advice was there—prophetic advice. He established the Ramakrishna Mission, which has centres in India and abroad. I know of the splendid work which that Mission is doing in the way of spiritual enlightenment and social service. We owe that Mission to his far-sighted vision, and we have it, and I have no doubt it will continue for many years to come to function for the spiritual succour and the physical sustenance of the large humanity which is now enmeshed in materialism—crude and trivial.

It is essential, therefore, that we should remember what this great soul stood for, what he taught us. It is not merely a question of remembering it at a centenary celebration, but trying to understand what he wished us to do, assimilate it, incorporate it in our being, and make us worthy of the citizens of the country which produced Vivekananda.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA

Prime Minister's House
New Delhi
January 8, 1963

On the occasion of the Centenary of Swami Vivekananda, I should like to pay my homage to this great son of India who was instrumental in putting a new life in our people. His writings are as fresh and as valuable today as when they were written. I am sure that they will continue to inspire not only the present, but coming generations.

Jawaharlal Nehru

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Allahabad Math, February 8, 1920 (Contd.)

The evening *ārati* (vesper service) was over at the shrine, and the devotees came to Swami Vijnananandaji. Among other things, he said: 'After the dissolution of the mortal frame, the soul takes a subtle form and more intensely reaps the harvest of previous deeds. If one can control his senses and transcend the bounds of time and space, one is in a position to summon the souls of dead persons, and get a response from them. They also respond as people respond to us when we call them.'

* * *

'It is the duty of everyone to donate a certain portion of income for the public good. For that is the law of nature. You will get back whatever you give. A change in your circumstances today may reduce you tomorrow to penury and make you dependent on others. You suffer as a result of your own past actions, and that is why you should devote a portion of your income for the good of others, instead of appropriating it entirely to yourself.'

* * *

'These ceremonial functions are not child's play. All our actions have the ultimate aim of attaining spiritual enlightenment or God-realization. Whether you reach that goal through the path of selfless action or through spiritual austerities is of no consequence. But the goal of all action is to receive illumination.. ... Yesterday morning, I had a beautiful experience—the same as I had when I went to Sarnath. Something like a black-snake was creeping up very fast—it was the rising up of the Kuṇḍalinī (coiled up energy). It gave me a feeling of intense joy.'

* * *

A certain devotee, in the depth of his despair, came to the Math to tell the Swami about his mental despondency. In words of encouragement, the Swami said to him: 'When the mind is overcome with evil thoughts, it becomes dejected and inactive like a mouse in the grip of a cat. But why should you suffer it to be like that? In situations like that, you should summon up within you the strength of a hero and shake off all evil thoughts. This is the only way out.'

Allahabad Math, February 18, 1920

Swami Vijnananandaji was very much tired today. He had gone to see Panrelā Mahādeva, accompanied by his cook. He had come back with his heart full of joy. He was completely oblivious of the physical exhaustion, and to the assembled devotees he was giving a spiritual discourse with great feeling: 'Although yesterday I said in passing that I would go and see Panrelā Mahādeva, it is not as if I was very keen about it. As a matter of fact, I might not have gone, but for a strange vision that came to me at night.' He became somewhat absent-minded while saying this and after keeping quiet for a few seconds, said slowly: 'From the bottom right up to the top of the brain, a bright dazzling light filled me up. It is impossible for words to describe it. A great joy pervaded my being. I could realize that it was the benediction of Lord Śiva. God is all-powerful and so is the Mother.'

Then, after a brief silence, he proceeded: 'He is the source of everything. He is the king, and again, He makes Himself the subject also. He is the *sādhu* as well as the thief. It is useless for people to brag about their actions. It is only through His will that things are happening. He is free to do whatever He likes and has not to depend on anyone else. We are alive and invoking His blessings, only because He wills it. We will die this very moment if He so decrees. When, therefore, our entire existence depends on Him, why should we form an attachment for worldly things? Our duty is to make ourselves His slaves, to think and work for Him and meditate on Him. Whatever we do should be a dedication at the feet of the Mother. Her external manifestations are time, space, and causality. As the perfect embodiment of all wisdom, She points out where our duty lies; and that is exactly what we have got to do.

'When the Divine Mother revealed Herself to the Master, he wanted to test the genuineness of the vision, by wishing that a big stone near him would jump three times if his experience had been real. No sooner did the thought enter his mind than the strange thing happened; and his confidence was established.

'There was another strange incident about the Master that we came to know of. In Bally, there is Nīl (Blue) Mahādeva, where, on the sixth day of the moon ('Nīl Ṣaṣṭhi', the day of the worship of the Mahādeva), the Master had gone with Hriday Ram. After performing the worship, he sat in front of the God Śiva and looked intently at the flower on the head of the deity. After sometime, he said: "I say, Hriday, Siva's head is moving and the flower is about to fall down. Look!" As soon as he said that, the flower fell from Śiva's head. Everything about the Master was so unusual! It is only after this flower drops from the deity's head that the *nīl* ceremony takes place. For the 'Gajan' festival, the *sādhus* spend about a month there in severe austerities for this thing to happen, particularly the chief among them. According to tradition, if the flower does not drop from Śiva's head on that day, the chief of the *sādhus* has to come forward and immolate himself in a blazing fire. Anyway, as soon as the flower dropped, there was an outburst of joy. I heard of this incident from a householder devotee at Aligarh whose name I cannot recall now. Corroboration of this story comes from Belur Math also. Rakhal Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) used to send *pūjā* (offerings) to Nīlkaṇṭha Śiva at Bally on *nīl* day; and after his bath, he used to fast and meditate on the God. Only at about 2 or 3 p.m., after the *pūjā* had been offered and the person taking the offerings had returned, he would take that *prasāda* and sit down to his meal.

'By the grace of Panrelā Mahādeva, I had no trouble on my journey to that place and back. I took the train as soon as I reached the station at 9.30 a.m.; the return train was at 2 p.m. The place is at a distance of about three or four miles from Phaphamau station. On arrival at the station, my cook went for a bath in the Gaṅgā, and I accompanied him. Seeing so many people bathing there, I also took a dip—the first time in four years, since I had that attack of blood dysentery. After the bath, I started walking along the sandy river bed with the midday sun blazing overhead. It was near about twelve o'clock. The road seemed unending. I thought: "O Master, why are you staying so far away here?" But, then, I realized that the fault was mine, for, after all, Panrelā Mahādeva had not asked me to go to Him. Anyway, I managed to reach there. All round the temple, there were heaps of earth and broken pieces of earthen pots. It is so, because the great rush prevents people from getting inside, and they throw from a distance the water which they bring in earthen pots. Four doors on four sides open into the temple, which is not less than fifteen feet square. Inside, it is all water and mud. I did my worship with water and flowers and after touching the head of the deity, walked round the temple three and a half times, after which I visited Hanumānjī's temple which is nearby. Then, I proceeded to Mother Pārvatī's temple. Remembering that my zodiacal name is "Parvati Charan", I thought, let me have the *darśana* of Pārvatī also. After *darśana*, I returned by another road. At a certain spot, a musical performance was in progress, and there were a few shops. There was a sweetmeat stall, and '*peḍas*' (a kind of sweetmeat), each half a seer in weight, were being sold at eight annas each. But they were full of dust, and so, I did not feel like taking them. Well, it saved money also! With one pice, I bought a *rākhi* (a red sacred thread tied on the wrist). If the protection of Śiva can be assured by spending only one pice, why forego it? So, I bought it.'

Then the Swami narrated the story of the hunter to which the festival of Śivarātri owes its origin. He said, also, that the significance of different religious festivals lies in the fact that, on those particular days, some great souls achieved spiritual illumination. To the extent that they achieve it, they manifest their power on these days. Another explanation is that, owing to the movements of the sun and earth, three power currents are created—physical, mental, and spiritual. The physical current creates the wind and the seasons; the mental current produces day and night; and the spiritual current is too subtle to be felt, although its action is none the less effective. The physical is subject to the mental, which, again, is subject to the spiritual. Somehow or other, that hunter was influenced by the spiritual current and felt that the killing of animals was wrong. So, giving up hunting animals as a means of livelihood, he took refuge in truth and God. On that particular day of the moon, the spiritual current was very strong, and that is why people attribute a special importance to that day and remain awake so as to imbibe a little of spiritual strength. I don't know how far this view is correct; I only mention it, because it strikes me as a possible explanation.'

* * *

'One thing that the Master constantly said was: "May you receive illumination and possess *bhakti* (devotion)!" That is the only blessing he was heard to give; his blessing was never in terms of acquisition of wealth or supernatural powers, which, to him, were worthless. He used to say that, when people came to him, he could see the inside of their minds as one sees things through a glass case. Can you imagine how this was possible? The centre of man's thoughts is in the mind and the senses are all subject to the mind. Seeing, hearing, and knowing are all the works of the mind. It is a common observation that the purer the mind, the clearer the understanding. A man's face is a fairly clear index of the state of his mind. The more unsullied the mind, the greater is its ability to apprehend the thought processes of other people. It is just like receiving radio waves. Any thought arising in a mind creates a vibration, and a mind which is a good receiver catches that vibration and understands the thought current that gave rise to it. The only thing necessary is the purity of mind.'

In another connection, the Swami said: 'Hold fast to the way of truth and do harm to no one, and God's blessings will be on you. You must have reverential faith in the words of great souls. Really great men declare from the junction of conscious and superconscious stages that they are willing to be born a thousand times for the welfare of humanity. Once they transcend that stage, these ideas no longer exist.'

By the bye, the Swami said that, shortly after his renouncing the world, somebody had asked him: 'Have you attained ultimate knowledge, sir?' The reply was in the negative. The questioner then asked: 'Then why have you renounced the world?' 'Because I have realized that its value is negligible and it leads to sure death. That is why I have given it up' came the emphatic reply.

A devotee asked: 'Without having something great and noble to hold on to, can a person give up what he has, even though he knows it to be of no value?'

'Yes, that's possible on account of *saṁskāras* (innate tendencies); he gives up the world, because he feels happier that way' replied the Swami.

Then the devotee launched upon various

arguments on the subject, to which Maharajji quietly listened. Then he said: 'Owing to ignorance, man tries to support his views with numerous intellectual arguments and the result is philosophizing. But he gets over all these, once he is blessed with true insight. The Master used to say: "The world is a bad place, and you should renounce it." There were no arguments behind it, because he knew that no one can get over his unhappiness without leaving it. Once it is realized that a thing is bad, the best thing is to discard it; there is no question of arguing about it.'

Allahabad Math, January 1, 1925

A number of devotees had come before evening. Swami Vijnanandaji was sitting quietly in the inner verandah, gazing intently at a coloured picture of Mahāvīrjī (Hanumān). A devotee had brought some bananas and sugar. Maharaj was very pleased to see the sugar and said: 'You have brought the sugar timely, indeed. I ran short of it and was thinking of telling you about it. You seem to have become a thought-reader.' And saying this, he laughed heartily. He dedicated the bananas to Mahāvīrjī, and then took one himself as *prasāda* and distributed the rest among the devotees present. Then he prayed to Mahāvīrjī: 'O Lord, you are Rāmacandra's servant, you are his devotee. Bless the children of this land and make them happy.' Tears glistened in his eyes and there was a lump in his throat when he said this, looking at Mahāvīr's picture. The devotees listened with amazement to this soulful prayer and every heart was flooded with a feeling of intense devotion.

Allahabad Math, January 4, 1925

Many devotees had come before evening to have the holy company of Swami Vijnanandaji. They found him joyous like a little boy. Mr. Bhattacharya came and made obeisance to him. The Swami laughingly said: 'There is a very big question under discussion here. A little while ago, there had come a stone mason here, who greeted me by saying 'Sītā-Rām'. I told him that Sītā-Rām was a petty thief. Astounded, he said: "No, no, Maharaj, Sītā-Rām is God." I asked him: "What do you mean by God?" He thought I didn't believe in God. So he said angrily that he didn't know. Then I asked a few others, also, as to what they understood by the word 'God'. Can you tell me, Mr. Bhattacharya, what your own ideas are about Him?'

Mr. Bhattacharya: 'God has six attributes.'

The Swami: 'Why? Can He not have seven? He has endless attributes.'

Mr. Bhattacharya kept silent. After some time, the Swami said laughingly: 'My God is the flute-playing Śrī Kṛṣṇa of Goloka and Vrindaban. I don't recognize anyone else as God.' He imitated the gestures of Śrī Kṛṣṇa while he said this. Some devotees thereupon started saying 'Mother Kālī is God', 'Śrī Rāmacandra is God', 'Śiva is God', and there was loud laughter. Maharaj, also, laughed heartily and said: 'As is the devotee, so is his God.' Then, suddenly, becoming grave, he said: 'God is Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss. Many are His names and endless are His manifestations. As the devotee looks upon Him, so does He manifest Himself to him. To some, therefore, He reveals Himself as Kālī, to some as Rāma, to some as Kṛṣṇa or Śiva, and so on. It all depends on the devotee's own mental constitution. At first, you feel the truth hazily, then comes realization. As long as you don't get true insight, there is a chance of bigotry remaining. Let me tell you the story of Ghaṇṭākarṇa who was a great devotee of Lord Śiva, whose name he always chanted. He had bells tied to his ears so that if anyone uttered the name of some other deity, he would start ringing those bells so as to prevent his hearing it. Brahmā came, Viṣṇu came, but he kept his eyes closed and refused to look at them. Then the Lord came as Hari-Hara (Viṣṇu and Śiva combined in one form). He opened one eye and looked at Hara (Śiva) only. Then the Lord told him: "Look, he that is Hari (Viṣṇu) is Hara, also. All are the same." But Ghaṇṭākarṇa remained obdurate. He said: "I don't understand all that, Lord. You must reveal yourself to me only as Hara and never as Hari." Do you remember what Hanumān said: "I know that Lakṣmīpati and Sītāpati are the same, but still the treasure of my heart is the lotus-eyed Rāmacandra"? Questions may, however, arise as to whether this is all fact or fiction. It is possible that there has been a good deal of exaggeration by the writers, but you can't dismiss all of it as trash. God has so many manifestations according to the mood of the devotee.'

In another connection, Swami Vijnanandaji said: 'The Master is like the Gaṅgā, and all sorts of people will come to him. Let them come. With whatever ideas they take refuge in him, they will get his blessings. To you the Master is all in all; others may not think so. You should not attempt to impose your ideas on them. You should be silent there, keeping your own ideas to yourself. What, after all, is the fault of the interpreters? One will realize only to the extent of his knowledge and understanding with which one has been endowed by God.'

'REMEMBER ME AND FIGHT'

[EDITORIAL]

Speaking of the Himalayas, Swami Vivekananda said in his memorable Almora address: 'This is the land of dreams of our forefathers, in which was born Pārvatī, the Mother of India. This is the holy land where every ardent soul in India wants to come at the end of his life, and to close the last chapter of its mortal career. On the tops of the mountains of this blessed land, in the depths of its caves, on the banks of its rushing torrents, have been thought out the most wonderful thoughts, a little bit of which has drawn so much admiration from foreigners, and which have been pronounced by the most competent judges to be incomparable. This is the land which, since my very childhood, I have been dreaming of passing my life in, . . . and it is the hope of my life to end my days somewhere in this father of the mountains where ṛṣis lived, where philosophy was born.'

'There are no mountain ranges anywhere in the world', writes Sardar K. M. Panikkar, the renowned historian, 'which have contributed so much to shape the life of a country as the Himalayas have in respect of India. It is not only the political life of the people of Hindustan, but the religion, mythology, art, and literature of the Hindus that bear the imprint of this great mountain barrier. To the Hindus, the Himalayas have been a perpetual source of wonder and veneration. To the peoples of the South, a thousand and five hundred miles away, to the men of the sea-coast, to the dwellers of the desert land of Rajputana, no less than to the inhabitants of the Gangetic valley, the Himalayas have been the symbol of India.

'The majesty of the snow-clad peaks, visible from afar, the inaccessibility of even the lesser ranges, the mysteries of the gigantic glaciers, and magnificence of the great rivers that emerge from its gorges have combined to give to the Himalayas a majesty which no other mountain range anywhere can claim. The

Hindus have invested it with an element of the divine: it is *devatā*—a fraction of divine majesty. It is the abode of gods to the Hindus, not the friendly Olympus of the Greeks, but the inaccessible seat of the great Śiva. From one end to the other, it is studded with sacred places of pilgrimage—Amarnath, Jwalamukhi, Hardwar, Kedarnath, Badrinath, Pasupat, and the isolated peak of Kailas, the unapproachable seat of the great God Himself. Pārvatī, the consort of Śiva, the *devī* whose worship in different forms constitutes so much of popular Hinduism, is the daughter of the mountain god. One of the great peaks, Gouri Sikhar, identified in popular mind with Everest, is held sacred as the place of her penance.

'The holy Gaṅgā takes its rise in the Himalayas and girdles it for over five hundred miles before it streams into the plains of Hindustan to fertilize and sanctify its soil. The Yamunā and the Sarasvatī, the Brahmaputra and the Sindhu, and most of their tributaries, on which depends the life of India, have all their origin in the Himalayas. It will thus be seen that the central plateau created by the Himalayas is the source of life, as of civilization, of nearly a half of the human race. Well might Śrī Kṛṣṇa claim in the *Gītā*: "Among mountains, I am the Himalayas."'

Kālidāsā, our national poet, refers to the Himalayas as *devatātmā*, of divine soul. It is *nagādhirāja*, the king of the mountains. The ranges of the Himalayas, which extend from the eastern ocean to the western, look like the measuring rod—*mānadaṇḍa*—demarcating the Indian sub-continent—of which they are the crown—from the lands farther north. The Himalayas are the eternal source of our spirit, the abode of our gods and goddesses, the ever-awakened sentinel of the North, looking benignly over the whole of our beloved motherland. The Himalayas are not just a part of our geography. They are the fountain-head of the perennial source of our immortal culture and religion.

II

As we are writing these lines, we see in front of us towards the North, at a distance, the long ranges of the mighty Himalayas spread out majestically against the background of a clear blue horizon. The magnificent lofty peaks, rising one over the other, are gloriously shining with fresh-fallen snow in the bright light of the morning sun that sheds its golden rays on them in unstinted bounty. The deep vast valleys at the foot of the hills are covered in a veil of thick mist. Not a bird chirps, not a leaf moves, not a man or animal is seen anywhere on the scene. It is all sombre, grave, and serene. It seems as if the whole nature is in a state of hushed awe, paying a tribute of respect to these mighty mountains which have always been the symbol of divine magnificence to every devout Indian, specially the Hindu. As we look at these mountains, we are filled with a strange faith that lends strength and sustenance to every ardent soul. This faith is not an empty make-believe. It arises from the sincere conviction that there is a Heavenly Father who is as great, as firm, as sure as this Father of mountains, and who listens to our prayers when we approach Him with humility and reverence. The Himalayas remind us of something higher beyond themselves.

But, as we are looking at these mighty mountains spreading vastly in front of us, we are also, perforce, painfully reminded that these sacred ranges of hallowed association with the spiritual and national consciousness of India are now being desecrated by a perfidious neighbour who has set his treacherous feet on these holy regions. The silence of the Himalayas has been disturbed; innocent poor, peace-loving people in thousands have been uprooted, their homes and hearths destroyed, their humble belongings looted and plundered. Vast number of lives has been lost, and an atmosphere of anxiety and uncertainty has been made to prevail not only over this land, but over the whole world. Al this critical moment, we Indians, who are the direct sufferers, naturally search our hearts to find out what fault of ours has brought this unexpected suffering and burden on our nation. Is it because we are peace-loving people? Is it because we never exhibited and gloried in physical might of militarism? Is it because we were making developments which caused heart-burning to our neighbour, whose welfare and friendship we always sought with all the earnestness characteristic of us? Or is it because we had become too complacent and forgetful about the needs of building up that strength which forewarns thoughtless military adventurers against casting their evil eyes on a gentle nation like ours? We do not know. But one thing we know that we have to face the challenge that has been thrown at us, and that we shall do it as brave, honest, strong, faithful people should do.

The one good thing of great importance that the present situation has brought in its wake is the patent fact that, behind seeming disunity and disintegration, which caused a headache to most of our leaders, was lying the fundamental and unshakable national unity, which needed this explosion to bring itself out on the surface. It has once again been proved that the great heritage of India—the underlying unity in the midst of diversity—is yet intact and alive. This unity is already having its effect inside and outside the country. The call of the hour has brought the whole nation to its duty, barring insignificant and negligible exceptions here and there among some blind persons who cannot see, or a few perverted men who will not see, the truth. The whole country stands as one united whole to face the challenge that confronts us today. All hearts are aflame with a sense of pious duty, all hands are vigorously at honest work, all efforts are fused together to join into a powerful national upsurge that lends strength to our cause and fills us with a faith which ensures success and victory.

III

What India is fighting for against a ruthless enemy is not merely the regaining of some lost parts of its land or driving the invaders beyond the political boundaries of the country. What we are fighting for is much more than all this. We are fighting for an ideal higher than common things; we are for a way of life which is precious and noble, we are fighting for a freedom which is not only political, but of higher concept. We are fighting to save that India which, according to Swami Vivekananda, 'has withstood the shocks of centuries, of hundreds of foreign invasions, of hundreds of upheavals of manners and customs'. This 'India stands firmer than any rock in the world, with its undying vigour, indestructible life. ... From time immemorial, this India has been the mine of precious ideas to human society; giving birth to high ideas herself, she has freely distributed them broadcast over the whole world. ... Our sacred motherland is the land of religion and philosophy—the birth-place of spiritual giants—the land of renunciation, where—and where alone—from most anicent to the modern times, there has been the highest ideal of life open to man. This is the motherland of philosophy, of spirituality, and of ethics, of sweetness, gentleness, and love. ... Like the gentle dew that falls unseen and unheard, and yet brings into blossom the fairest of roses, has been the contribution of this India to the thought of the world. ... Ideas after ideas have marched out from her, but every word has been spoken with a blessing behind it and peace before it.' Today, also, India is playing an important part towards the maintenance of peace and goodwill among men, to take only a more glorious role towards these ends in future. It is this India—great, noble, and gentle—that we are fighting to save from an unholy threat, and fortunately, we have a philosophy of life that can give us immense energy and strength at this critical hour.

IV

With a hoary past of an eventful history, India has a rich cultural heritage which has come down to us through a varied course of situations and circumstances. While it is essentially spiritual, it has not overlooked the necessary steps leading to the attainment of spirituality. Of the four *puruṣārthas* (aims of life), which a man must need attain for a complete fruition of human life, Dharma is the first in matter of importance.

This word '*dharma*' has been rendered into English variously. The law, the norm, religion, righteousness, virtue, and all other terms which have been used to render the meaning of '*dharma*' fail to convey the full significance of the Sanskrit term. The Indian thinkers, with their wonderful capacity for finding unity in diversity, have coined this term which has a very wide application. Generally speaking, '*dharma*' denotes the standard of excellence that a particular object should attain with reference to the quality that characterizes it. Moral values elevate man above brute creation; the Dharma of man, therefore, is the measure of the standard of excellence attainable by him in the realm of moral values. Again, human Dharma, in its more specialized aspect, can be subdivided into many distinct norms, depending upon the distinction of caste, creed, occupation, sex, etc., and also, situation. There is a Dharma for the Brāhmaṇa, another for the Kṣatriya, still another for the Vaiśya, and yet another for the Śūdra. There is a Dharma for the *sannyāsin* and another for the householder. There is a Dharma for the woman and a Dharma for the child. There is one Dharma for action, another for rest, one for war, another for peace. There is a Dharma which is eternal, *śāśvata*; and there is a Dharma (*āpad-dharma*) which needs adjustment in relation to necessity and situation. The Dharma Śāstras have elaborated these and have framed codes for various groups and various occasions. It is the duty of man to find out what is his Dharma, as enjoined by the Śāstras, in a particular situation, at a given circumstance, and try to perform them to attain excellence in it. As Swami Vivekananda said, each is great in his own place. The Hindu religion is known as Sanātana Dharma, the eternal religion; for, rising above mere doctrines and dogmas, it leads its votaries through various steps, to reach the Highest, by the righteous performance of their particular duties to the fullest measure.

Dharma should sustain us at this hour of need, too. India is a nation wedded to the fundamental values of Spirit. Like individuals, as a nation, too, we hold dear the principles of non-violence, non-stealing, non-acquisition, non-covetousness, forbearance, compassion, forgiveness, and fellow-feeling, etc. We have never been expansionists, we have never coveted an inch of another's territory. In our way of life, we give the highest place to Dharma. But this should not mean that the culture and practice of such qualities would make us milksops. Our adherence to Dharma should not make us acquiesce in evil in any shape or form; indeed, to do so would be *adharma*. All our Purāṇas and epics portray the pictures of righteous battles against evil and untruth, resulting in ultimate victory of right over the wrong—the triumph of Dharma over *adharma*. It is for the upholding of this Dharma, that the supreme Lord incarnates again and again. When he came as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he delivered the grand message of the *Gītā*, the counsel of perfection, which boldly explains the nature of Dharma in all its aspects and demonstrates its permanent value in an ever-changing world.

The message of the *Gītā* is the message of manliness, the message of strength. Swami Vivekananda says: 'If one reads this one *śloka*—"Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pṛthā! Ill doth it become thee. Cast off this faint-heartedness and arise, O scorcher of foes!"—one gets all the merits of reading the entire *Gītā*; for, in this one *śloka*, lies imbedded the whole message of the *Gītā*.' It was this clarion call of Dharma which removed confused Arjuna's doubt and hesitation and inspired him to fight the *dharma-yuddha* (righteous battle) that confronted him. We, too, today have to listen to the command of Lord Kṛṣṇa, faced as we are with a situation—difficult, confusing, and calling for supreme sacrifice. The battle has to be fought at the front, in the fields, in the factories, and in the houses; as a matter of fact, in every Indian heart; for what is needed is an all-out effort to win victory for all that we hold dear and precious. We shall win, for righteousness is on our side, and we have the courage to face the worst and the spirit to sacrifice the most for a victorious end. Happily, we have the valuable moral and material support of all the right-thinking peoples of the world. Our strength is multiplied manifold. We shall have faith in our Dharma, faith in our culture, faith in the Lord, and do our duty. With resolute determination and steeled nerves, and observing the rules of the game, we shall fight against evil, fight against injustice, fight against unrighteousness—each at his own post to the best of his capacity. We shall remember God and fight; for the command today is: '*Mām-anusmara yuddhya ca*—Remember Me and fight.'

THE ŚAKTI-SĀDHANĀ OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Dr. Shashi Bhusan Das Gupta

Sri Ramakrishna was a Brāhmaṇa priest in the Kālī temple at Dakshineshwar, the deity Kālī being well known here as Bhavatāriṇī, the Mother-Goddess who liberates from the bondage of existence. A galaxy of sparkling young men gathered round this Brāhmaṇa priest; they were headed by Naren, the most conspicuous of them all. All these young men later became *saññyāsins* with a palpable leaning towards Vedānta, by which we mean here the school of non-dualistic thought. Some of them preached Vedānta in the Western countries by way of interpreting the true spirit of Hinduism, and the centres they established in the different parts of the world are organizations for the dissemination of the Vedāntic ideas. Yet they all professed, or we should rather say, they confessed—for, we believe, they did it with all the sincerity of their heart—that they drew all their inspiration from the Master—that Brāhmaṇa priest of the Kālī temple. The fact is apparently paradoxical—all these stalwarts of non-dualistic Vedānta believing and preaching the complete identification of the individual soul with the supreme One, drawing their inspiration from the life and teachings of a Brāhmaṇa priest, whose business it was to worship the deity in the temple with all the paraphernalia popular Hinduism enjoins.

There is one way of trying to resolve the paradox by saying that these youngsters, with their tender age and easily impressionable minds, were, no doubt, deeply touched by the God-intoxicatedness of the Brāhmaṇa priest with all his simplicity and sincerity. But many of them had their intellectual training in positivism, scepticism, agnosticism, utilitarianism, etc. of Western thought, as well as in non-dualistic Vedānta, Sāṅkhya-Yoga, and even in Buddhism of Indian thought. They became believers due to the charming contact and the irresistible influence of Sri Ramakrishna and they imbibed the spirit of disinterestedness, equanimity, and charity from the life and teachings of that saintly man; but, in practical life, they developed their belief in their own way with the training they had in oriental and occidental philosophy.

This, however, is not the fact in this case. There is no denial of the fact that these young disciples were not unlettered devotees like the Master, but were trained in philosophy and scriptures both of the Orient and the Occident; but their mind worked and developed in the line indicated by the Master. The fact will be amply demonstrated by quoting one of the utterances of Swami Vivekananda: 'I am what I am, and what I am is always due to him. Whatever in me or in my words is good and true and eternal came to me from his mouth, his heart, his soul. Sri Ramakrishna is the spring of this phase of the earth's religious life, of its impulses and activities. If I can show the world one glimpse of my Master I shall not live in vain.'[1] All the ideas and activities of the later Ramakrishna movement, predominantly on the non-dualistic line, represent no modification of the original inspiration in its process of evolution, rather in a zigzag way, or as a result of syncretism; the evolution was very smooth and natural. There is really no paradox or contradiction involved in the matter at all. The how is the interesting question that can be answered only by an analysis and interpretation of the spiritual endeavours of the Master.

In his spiritual endeavours, Sri Ramakrishna made various experiments just to demonstrate that whatever may be the attitude or method, the spiritual experience is essentially the same. But in our present discourse, we shall not dilate on the various aspects of the attitudes and methods adopted by him; we shall deal particularly with one aspect of his *sādhanā* (spiritual endeavour), the dominant aspect, the aspect of his approach to the supreme Reality as the Cosmic Power, conceived as the Divine Mother, himself being an unconditionally self-resigned child 'living and moving and having his being' in Her. This is what we mean by the *śakti-sādhanā* of Sri Ramakrishna.

To understand the *śakti-sādhanā* of Sri Ramakrishna, it is necessary, we think, to draw out an historical sketch of the *śakti-sādhanā* in Bengal, at least from the eighteenth century; for this will give us an idea of the background against which Sri Ramakrishna flourished historically.

Śakti-worship is a religious attitude peculiar to the Indians. In the history of world-religion, we find mention of various mother-goddesses—particularly in the territories round the Mediterranean sea; and they are not always conceived as the embodiment of the Almighty Power of God—as the Almighty Power, conceived as the Cosmic Mother, coming close to the individual in infinite motherly love. Again, even among the States of India, Bengal is noted as a special centre of *śakti-sādhanā*. The *śakti-sādhanā* of Bengal had broadly two of its notable aspects during the medieval period, we mean the period between the twelfth and the eighteenth centuries; these aspects were the aspects of ceremonial worship of the various mother-goddesses on different auspicious dates throughout the whole year, and the other was the aspect of the Tāntric *sādhanā* which was predominantly a Yogic *sādhanā* involving sometimes secret sexo-yogic practices. These esoteric practices known as Tāntricism was, and could by nature only be, limited to selected groups. Very popular and widespread were the ceremonial worships—particularly the worship of Durgā or Caṇḍikā as the *Magna Mater* during the autumn of every year. These ceremonial periodic worships were with the masses, as they are still with the masses, more of the nature of feasts and festivals, than endeavours of deeply spiritual significance. It was the great devout *yogin* Rāmaprasāda of the eighteenth century who gave this *śakti-sādhanā* of Bengal a new orientation, not by any discursive method, but by means of his practices and realizations, expressed through a large number of songs, which were sometimes the outpourings of a heart filled to the brim with supreme bliss, or were, sometimes, the outcries of a heart bleeding white, struggling against all the odds of life, and yet trying to stick to the spiritual truth with fierce tenacity.

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[1] Reminiscences of the Swami's visit to London, recorded by Mr. Eric Hammond, quoted in the *Life of Swami Vivekananda*, 1955, p. 416.

Through his songs, which are surprisingly forceful in their directness and sincerity, Rāmaprasāda salvaged Śāktaism from all sorts of esoteric aberrations and sectarian limitations and raised it to the level of a universal spiritual effort. Nothing was more unpleasant to him than outward show, pomp, and pageantry in the religious sphere, and he grew averse, also, to the ceremonial and the ritualistic side. Of wine, which is much too spoken of in both esoteric and exoteric Śāktaism, Rāmaprasāda said in one of his songs: 'Wine I do not take—drinks of immortal spiritual delight do I take with the muttering of the name of my Divine Mother Kālī; my inner experiences make me intoxicated—I am called a drunkard by the drunken.' The whole stress of Rāmaprasāda was on *bhāva*—sincerity of the emotional approach, firmly based on an unflickering faith in the Mother—a spiritual power in whom 'I', with 'my' universe, is comprehended. This *bhāva* in man presupposes long periods of preparation—perfect purification of the body and the mind. This is all that is to be done on the part of man; the rest is to be done by the grace of the Mother who acts spontaneously on a medium which is well prepared. The analogy of the magnet and a piece of iron has often been brought in. The action of attracting a piece of raw iron towards it pertains to the magnet, but deep layers of rust prevent the piece of iron from being drawn to the magnet. All that is required of the piece of iron is to be purified, and the greater the purity, the greater will be the automatic attraction towards the magnet which, for man, is the Divine Mother. The purer the man, the stronger the attraction from the Mother. The only duty left for the devotee is to cleanse the inner temple so that best preparations may be made for making the altar of the Mother therein.

As a matter of fact, the aim of Rāmaprasāda was also ultimately Brahman-realization—of course, with some modification, of which we shall presently speak. Brahman was taken by these devotees to be the great One, the supreme One, and Rāmaprasāda has repeatedly said: 'I have known the Goddess of the dark-blue colour (Śyāmā) to be Brahman.' It has again been said by him: 'When at the touch of the lustre of the truth, the lotus of my heart unfolds its petals, and the darkness in my mind is removed, I shall resign myself completely and lose myself completely in the Mother—the Saviour. All senses of difference and duality will be cast off and the grumblings of the mind will be stopped, and I shall accept hundred times the infallibility of the Vedas which say that the truth is non-dual, for, in reality, formless is my Mother, the Saviour. Proclaims Rāmaprasāda, my Mother resides in all the pots (forms); O thou, blind of eyes, realize the Mother as the luminous truth removing all darkness.'

Scriptures and discursive arguments were not for Rāmaprasāda, which were compared to the insincere smile of the hypocrites. Truth is to be always intuited within, and that intuition has always brought it home to Rāmaprasāda that 'it is the Mother who resides in all the forms'. The Upaniṣads exclaim: 'One is the truth that has assumed all these forms.' Rāmaprasāda would, also, proclaim the same truth; but then, there would be only this difference that the indefinite indeterminate One of the Upaniṣads would be replaced in his case by the Mother who can be definite more than the earthly Mother, in spite of being the indefinite and indeterminate Truth. There is some fine distinction made by Rāmaprasāda, which was emphasized, we shall presently see, by Ramakrishna, also, between the Brahman and the

Mother; the Mother is not exactly the Brahman, but the Brahmamayī, which means a transformation and a transfiguration of the Brahman in active relation to man in infinite love and grace.

Śākta devotees of Bengal, among whom Rāmaprasāda was the most prominent, had a philosophical perspective of viewing the relation of Śiva and Śakti, which is mythically described as a conjugal tie, Śakti being the counterpart of Śiva as his consort. There is a traditional way of viewing Śakti as the Power, belonging to some one; and therefore, Śakti is the Cosmic Power of God who is the possessor of Power. Power here derives its truth from the Powerful. But there is the other way of viewing the truth which was favoured by the Śāktas of Bengal, though they were not openly opposed to the mythical descriptions, of which, also, they made extensive use. According to this view, power is not something that belongs to the supreme being, but power itself is the supreme Truth, everything else has its meaning inasmuch as it possesses the power. Śiva is the best medium that realizes and reflects this supreme truth as the Power. In interpreting the mythical posture of Śiva, lying prostrate as a corpse under the feet of the Mother-Goddess, poets like Rāmaprasāda and others would describe Śiva as the supreme Yogin (*parama-yogin*) who constantly and eternally realizes the truth of the Mother.

Thus it is clear that the Mother is not to be viewed as the power of God, but the Mother is the God as power. God has two aspects; in one aspect, He is the ultimate, immutable ground of all that comes into being or may come into being; and in the other aspect, God is actively associated with the world of being, and, as a person, comes close to man to respond to the call of man; this second aspect of God is the Mother aspect of God—God condescending to man in infinite love and grace. In this active aspect, God is not merely the Mother. He can assume any form to meet the temperamental differences among the devotees and can incarnate Himself differently to fulfil diverse purposes. With Rāmaprasāda, therefore, the Mother stands for the same truth as God as Śiva or Rāma or Kṛṣṇa, and the narrow limits of sectarianism are transcended in this way.

As for the spiritual experience, Rāmaprasāda had a preference for the dualistic tendency. Rāmaprasāda would not argue whether dualism or non-dualism is the correct thing; he would accept everything as possible with regard to the supreme Truth which can synthesize all contradictions within it; but he would argue for his dualistic approach in terms of temperamental preference. The pet analogy with Rāmaprasāda which was repeated also by Ramakrishna, was the analogy of 'being the sugar and of tasting sugar'. If you be the sugar, you are altogether deprived of the possibility of tasting sugar. Merging oneself completely in the Absolute means being deprived of the possibility of enjoying supreme bliss derived from the communion with the supreme Truth. Some distinction between the individual and the Absolute must, therefore, be maintained, which may leave the possibility for enjoying eternal bliss. With some, this dualistic approach and the truth of some sort of a distinction is not a question of preference, it is philosophic; with Rāmaprasāda and other devotees of his type, it is more psychological than philosophical.

Historically speaking, Rāmaprasāda and a host of other devotees of the Mother who followed the footsteps of the great saint prepared the ground for the advent of Ramakrishna about a century after. In Sri Ramakrishna, we find the consummation of the spiritual efforts and realizations of his predecessors. Historically, it has to be noted that Ramakrishna had Rāmaprasāda and the other Śākta devotees as his predecessors; and he again had Swami Vivekananda and his fellow monks as his successors, who mainly preached in India and abroad non-dualistic Vedānta as the kernel of Hinduism. He began by saying that there is really no contradiction involved in this fact. The how of it has been indicated in presenting a brief exposition of the religious views and approach of Rāmaprasāda, the Śākta devotee; and we shall now dilate on the point with reference to the views and practical spiritual efforts of Ramakrishna.

The main point to demonstrate is that there is essentially no difference in the mode of *sādhanā* known as the Śākta *sādhanā* and the Vedāntic *sādhanā*.

We have indicated before that Sri Ramakrishna's life of spiritual efforts and realization was, indeed, an interesting chequered life. If we follow it historically, he got himself initiated into the Śākta cult first by Kenarama Bhattacharya in his early life, and then, followed his life of priesthood in the Kālī temple of Dakshineshwar for several years. According to the account given by Swami Saradananda, a period of ten years, roughly between the years 1856 and 1866, was the period of Ramakrishna's intensive spiritual practices of various types. For the first four years, his spiritual efforts were concentrated in the worship of the Mother-Goddess in the temple, the next four years were years of intensive esoteric Tāntric *sādhanā* under Bhairavī Brāhmaṇī, an elderly lady versed in Tāntric *sādhanā;* in the following years, he took seriously to various experiments; he was advised into the Rāma cult by a Rāmait saint, known as the Jatadhari, and he followed the method for sometime; then, for sometime, he guised himself as a love-intoxicated maiden for approaching the eternal beloved Kṛṣṇa, in the manner of the Vaiṣṇavas; again, he resorted to the strict discipline of the life of *sannyāsa* (renunciation) under the guidance of the veteran non-dualist monk Totapuri, and during this period, he engaged himself exclusively in practices of *nirvikalpa-samādhi* or the spiritual state of arrest without any mental residue; again, he practised Islam in an orthodox manner for sometime, and again, Christianity for another period. All these accounts may sound queer indeed to a man of reason even in the religious field, for it may, at the first instance, be difficult to discover any seriousness behind all these hotch-potch experiments in the spiritual march. But nothing of these was without the profoundest of solemnity to Ramakrishna, for he had a double mission behind all these: first, to be convinced himself that all views and methods in the religious field led to the same spiritual realization, and secondly, to demonstrate this fact to the world at large. Two things emerged out of these experiments of Ramakrishna: first, that, whatever may be the approach according to individual differences in taste and temperament and the differences in social heritage, the truth cannot but be one and the same; and secondly, spiritual truth is no monopoly of any sect or society; it reveals itself in infinite lustre and supreme bliss to men of all ages and under all climates, provided the approach is sincere.

The variety of methods adopted by Sri Ramakrishna was justified by him on another ground also; he would often say, 'Why should I compel myself to the monotony of a single course? I must enjoy the variety of the realization'—a variety that is consequent on the differences of psychological attitudes and the methods adopted. The path of non-dualism, he would sometimes say, is a path of dry disinterestedness and relentless austerity; he was for enjoyment even in his spiritual life—he was not for self-annihilation or self-immersion.

It has to be noted that enjoyment in spiritual life presupposes two things, the enjoyer and the enjoyed. Non-dualistic Vedānta is always categorical on the point that, in the ultimate Brahman-realization, there is neither the knower, nor the knowable, nor the possibility of any knowledge in the absence of the former two. The state of Brahman-realization is, therefore, a transcendental, indescribable state—a state of complete identification with the ultimate

Reality. But, in spiritual realization, Ramakrishna like Rāmaprasāda, was in favour of retaining some I-ness and Thy-ness. The philosophical dualists would say that there is no question on the part of the devotee of making any special effort for retaining the I-ness upto the last stage of realization; for the I-ness remains there, because of the very distinct nature of the individual as a spiritual atom. Because of this eternal atomic self-exclusive nature of the individual and the eternal all-pervasive nature of the ultimate Reality, there cannot be any question of their complete identification. But Ramakrishna would not argue in that way; he would not agree with the dualists in denying the possibility of this identification; accepting the possibility of this identification, he would say, he just did not like always to be identified and immersed thus. Ramakrishna advocated rather a self-imposed distinction between the individual and the Absolute just to enjoy the communion between the two. He would, often, speak of two kinds of I-ness, the one created by *māyā* or the principle of cosmic illusion; and the other created by a special attitude of the individual towards the self and God; here, the self must stand in relation of a servant to God or as the child to the Divine Mother. In his homely way, Ramakrishna would describe the former I-ness as the unbaked or the untempered I-ness, whereas the latter was the baked or the tempered I-ness. It seems from the sayings of Ramakrishna, and also from the songs of his predecessors, that this state of duality was not really a state that denied the possibility of a state of non-duality or preceded it; it was rather a state which accepted the truth of non-duality, and then, followed it, just to create an enjoyable variety in the flow of spiritual realization. We are reminded in this connection of a saying which runs as follows: 'Dualism is false and illusory, until and unless one is firmly placed in non-dualism; but the dualism that is created by the devotees for enjoying the divine sports is far sweeter than non-dualism.' Ramakrishna was a devotee of just this type; the mother-child relation was so sweet to him only after the non-dual realization was a thing of common experience. But having been fully entitled to it, he would avoid it consciously—sometimes, he would hate it, as it would deprive him of the opportunity of enjoying the most intense communion with God in the sweetest relation of a son to his mother.

Should we then say that this Mother is not an objectively real entity, it is just an apparition conjured up by determined psychological conditions of the particular devotee? Nothing could be farther from the life-long beliefs of Ramakrishna. Swami Vivekananda, with his mind steeped in the agnosticism and scepticism of the nineteenth century Bengal, would often thus challenge the Master in the days of his (Vivekananda's) earlier acquaintance with the Master; the Master would be deeply pained at heart at this disbelief on the part of the disciple; and he rejoiced boyishly on the day he could win over the sceptic young man to believe that the Mother is as much objectively true as the non-dual formless Absolute is. God is as much true in His transcendental loneliness—in His undifferentiated oneness—as He is in all the forms He is capable of assuming as the Father or the Mother or the Eternal Beloved in active and intimate relation with the individual man—a God who not only comprehends me and my world, but who comes closest to me in a personal relationship. There is no contradiction or exclusiveness between these two aspects of the nature of the ultimate Reality; they cohere easily in the very integral nature or the wholeness of the truth.

Speaking generally, Ramakrishna would say that the path of non-dualism is a difficult path, to be pursued only by spiritual aspirants of very high calibre. It is extremely difficult to hold oneself fast in the non-dual realization for a long time, unless one is exceptionally strong in body and mind and with a perfect training. The easier course for ordinary people, he thought, is to concentrate on some form of God as the Father or the Mother or the Beloved, according to his personal choice; but when the concentration becomes complete, the form imperceptibly melts away, leaving behind the realization of the one all-pervasive blissful Truth. To put the whole thing in terms of Yoga-physiology, Ramakrishna would say that, of all the plexuses of the body, the highest plexus (or the lotus of a thousand petals), situated at the top of the head, is the centre for realizing the truth as the non-dual Brahman; it is the region of knowledge. The next three plexuses situated in the region between the eye-brows, in the neck, and in the region of the heart, respectively, are the centres for realizing devotional delights of various grades. The lower three plexuses are centres for realization of worldly pleasures. It is very difficult to keep oneself always firmly placed in the highest plexus; Ramakrishna advised many of his devotees to concentrate on the three plexuses just below. As for himself, he preferred to dwell on these three plexuses to maintain and enjoy his relation of love and affection with the Mother.

The ultimate Truth, according to the Hindus, is Sat-Cit-Ānanda: It is Sat—It exists; It is Cit—It is the conscious principle; It is Ānanda—It is the supreme bliss. The realization of Sat-Cit-Ānanda in the whole of one's being is the ultimate aim. God with a form has nicely been explained by all the dualistic schools of Hinduism as the Sat-Cit-Ānanda-ghana, i.e. the solidification of the Sat-Cit-Ānanda just in response to the call of the individual soul. This solidification takes place through the unthinkable powers of God moved in infinite love which acts as grace with reference to the individual aspirant. The general attitude of Sri Ramakrishna, therefore, was that there was nothing very serious about the fuss over dualism and non-dualism. Naren, the buoyant young man, throbbing with all the future possibilities as the would-be Swami Vivekananda, preferred the non-dualistic attitude, even after he was won over to accept the truth of the Mother also; and of this, Ramakrishna would often say to his companions: 'Naren has his house built on a very high altitude, he dwells in non-dualism; that is possible specially for him.'

But, personally, Ramakrishna preferred dwelling in dualism—not because of the fact that he was a man of any inferior calibre, but because he was a *paramahaṁsa*, which means the great swan—a swan that swims and dallies in the stream of infinite bliss, without being lost in it. Ramakrishna, as a *paramahaṁsa*, would often say: 'Don't keep me senseless with Brahman-knowledge or Brahman-realization, O my Mother; always keep me alive in the variety of love and bliss.' Ramakrishna had his transcendent experience of oneness of the Truth, often, in the very temple of the Mother Kālī. In speaking of his experience one day in the temple of the Mother, the saint exclaimed: 'The Mother Herself showed me that everything within the temple was a transformation of the Mother Herself; She showed me that everything was a transfiguration of the conscious principle—the image of the Mother, the altar, all the paraphernalia of worship, all the wooden things, and things of marble—everything was the transfiguration of the conscious principle—nothing was material.' But his were not the efforts to attain the Formless through the form, but to come down to the form from the Formless, just to have his sportive enjoyments, like the great swan in the lake of infinite bliss.

The aforesaid predilection of Sri Ramakrishna speaks of a characteristic quality of the religious mind of a section of the Indian saints. The general approach of Yoga and Vedānta is to make the mind purged, ultimately, of all the states and processes, and in the absence of any sort of psychological activity, there cannot be any question of the knower and the knowable, and any relation between the two. But a *paramahaṁsa* is not for the total arrest of the entire psychological process; he is rather for the mutation of the entire substance and the process. Some working of the absolutely purified and tranquillized mind they prefer, but they cannot but have God as the object. We have already spoken of the retention of the I-ness and Thy-ness even in the final state; a faint trace of this I-ness and Thy-ness keeps the purified psychosis working, which helps the devotee share the divine communion as a partner with the consciousness of active participation.

In the narratives and anecdotes that are available on the life and sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, we sometimes find him realizing the Truth with the strictly non-dualistic attitude and training. We, again, often find him falling into trance with a song on Mother Kālī or a song describing the supra-natural love-dalliances of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa—and again, we find him enjoying the spiritual experiences of Śrī Caitanya, on hearing songs describing his maddening love towards the Lord. What exactly is the difference in the spiritual experience in each of these cases? To us, who are attempting an academic analysis and judgement in the field of spiritual experiences, it seems that the spiritual experience of man, at bottom, is substantially the same—the experience of infinite light and supreme bliss, either as emerging from the self or as pouring from above from the original source of all light and bliss. By his dualistic approach, a *paramahaṁsa* has his purified psychosis conditioned in a particular way; because of the psychological conditioning, the experience becomes slightly tinged, as it were, which gives rise to a congenial variety in the experience that these great saints appreciate very much. The analogy of aesthetic delight may be of some help in understanding the situation. The Indian critics have all accepted the truth that aesthetic delight is, at bottom, one and the same in all the cases; yet they spoke of its kinds as the erotic delight, the heroic delight, the delight of sadness as well of laughter, etc. The immediate causes and conditions that were responsible for the generation in the mind of the aesthetic delight accounted for the subtle shades in the experiences of the delight which, in reality, is one and undifferentiated.

ŚAṄKARA'S CONCEPTION OF THE WORLD IN PRAPANCASĀRA-TANTRA

By Dr. P. S. Sastri

It is often said by many a critic that, in the idealism of Śaṅkara, the world in which we have our being is not real. This charge makes out that Śaṅkara's approach to the problem of the external world is mainly negative. Attempts, however, have been made, chiefly by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and Professor P. T. Raju, to show that this view is not completely true. A careful reading of the Master's voluminous commentary on the *Vedānta-Sūtra,* if brought into relation with his Tāntric works, confirms the positive character attributed by these thinkers to the universe of persons and things. This contention acquires greater validity and strength from what Śaṅkara himself has said in his *Prapañcasāra-Tantra,* which was commented upon by his own disciple, Padmapāda.

1. In his exposition of the *Vedānta-Sūtra,* Śaṅkara clearly postulates two levels of

reality from the standpoint of the individual. First, there is a reality which is conditioned by names, forms, change, and difference. This is the reality with which we are normally conversant in our empirical life. This is not an unreal reality. Secondly, there is a reality which is unconditioned or absolute.[1] The former reality is represented by the world of finite beings and things including the God of religion; and the latter is the Absolute or Brahman.

The Absolute may be viewed as Being. This characteristic, says Śaṅkara, is the principle immanent in space and other empirical objects.[2] More explicitly, we are told that the contents of the world are the features or characteristics of Spirit.[3] The entire world has its being, precisely because it partakes of this character of the Absolute; and this position has been accepted by Śaṅkara in unmistakable terms.[4] It is in this light that we read that the reality of the world is Brahman itself.[5]

Brahman is the cause of the world, and the two are non-different.[6] However, it is said that the effect alone participates in the nature of the cause, and not the cause in that of the effect.[7] The effect is the manifested world, beginning with *ākāśa* or space; and the cause is the highest Brahman. With this cause, in the sense of the highest Reality, the effect is identical, having no existence beyond it.[8]

2. This view appears in a more pronounced form in the *Prapañcasāra-Tantra*. Reality is designated Śakti as in the other Tāntric texts. This Reality comes to appear as Prakṛti or Pradhāna, the matrix of the world;[9] and at times, the word *māyā*, also, is applied to it. Reality, we are told, is the Prakṛti in the form of the elemental world; it is the life of all that lives. As a concrete entity, Śakti (Mother Energy) is the ruler or God of the universe, though her supreme form is Māyā. She is the form of the whole universe, since she pervades all; and yet, she is formless. As the immanent principle, she is all and is in the form of all; she is the energy in all things and is, as such, the same as the Spirit. These passages provide an illuminating commentary on Śaṅkara's conception of the world. The world is not a non-entity. It has a certain reality which can be neither doubted nor denied.

3. Māyā, Prakṛti, and Śakti are synonymous terms, not only in this Tantra, but even in Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra*.[10] It is an indeterminate entity, says Śaṅkara, which makes creation and even activity possible.[11] Such an entity is called space in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*,[12] immutable in the *Muṇḍaka*,[13] and Māyā in the *Śvetāśvatara*[14] Upaniṣads.

The principle of Māyā is responsible for the emergence of names and forms, though it can be described as neither real nor non-real; and it is the cause of all phenomenal existence.[15] It is grounded in God and is designated indeterminate.[16] Consequently, the *Prapañcasāra* speaks of Viṣṇu as Māyātman, having the nature or self of Māyā, Śiva who has Śakti is Māyin, the possessor of Māyā. Śiva reveals himself as determinate and also as indeterminate.

This Māyā is indeterminate, only because it is impossible to say whether it is real or non-real.[17] It is not absolutely real like Brahman; nor is it unreal like the water in a mirage. It has a certain degree of reality; and if it does not exist, all our empirical life would be a manifest impossibility.[18] The plurality that we have in the world is a creation of this principle which brings forth names and forms; and yet it is, says Śaṅkara, both evolved and non-evolved.[19] Still we cannot define it either as existing or non-existing.[20] As both evolved and non-evolved, it is both real and unreal; and this unique synthesis of the real and non-real is at the very basis of all finite experience.[21]

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[1] *Brahma-Sūtra Śāṅkara-bhāṣya* (with the commentaries Bhāmatī, Kalpataru, and Parimala), 1938, Nirnayasagar Press, Bombay (hereinafter abbreviated as V.S.B.), p. 176.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 441, 443.

[3] *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, II.1.

[4] V.S.B., p. 444.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 272, 273.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 471.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 446.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 454.

[9] *Prapañcasāra-Tantra*, edited by Arthur Avalon in the series entitled Tāntrika texts, Volume XIX. (Published for the Agamanusandhana Samiti by the Sanskrit Press Depository, 27-1 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta) 1935, I.26. The rest of this article is entirely based on this Tāntric work; wherever other works are indicated, relevant footnotes have been provided.

[10] V.S.B., p. 462.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 377.

[12] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, III.8.11.

[13] *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, II.1.2.

[14] *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, IV.10. See also V.S.B., p. 378.

[15] V.S.B., p. 462.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 378.

4. While commenting on the opening verse of the *Prapañcasāra,* Padmapāda observes that the world is a mysterious (*apūrva*) evolution of Reality. The evolutes then necessarily claim some reality. Of these, the primeval matrix, the individual soul, and time, says Śaṅkara, have a reality which is ontologically prior to the reality of other empirical data.

The *Prapañcasāra* first speaks of five pure real entities, of which the first four represent forms of Absolute Consciousness. The fifth is pure knowledge, followed by Māyā. This Māyā carries claim to reality, and it seeks not only to conceal the real but to distort it. The distortions, in effect, constitute the emergence of the world of plurality. Thus emerge a series of real entities characterized by the three *guṇas* or basic elements.

5. Before we proceed to consider the emergence of real entities, it is necessary to note that this Tantra is devoted to a detailed examination of the universe (*prapañca*) in the five-fold aspect. These five are the gross, subtle, causal, generic, and self-conscious aspects of Reality. The supreme transformation of Reality gives rise to the indeterminate sound which is Prakṛti; and from this originates the principle of intellection. The latter brings forth the ego. From the ego are born the five subtle or imperceptible principles which give rise to the five gross elements. From the ego there also emerge the five organs of action, the five organs of knowledge, and the mind. All these elements go to make up the material world.

The great Prakṛti,, distinguished by the three *guṇas* (qualities, attributes), pervades and possesses the qualities of the five elements. This Prakṛti is in the ten organs of action and knowledge. When Prakṛti is awakened into activity by the Absolute Reality, then she is the doubting and inquiring mind; and in the act of determining certainty, she comes to appear as the intellect. When she knows herself as the knower, she is the ego. Thus it is Prakṛti or Māyā that appears as the principle of intellection and also as the ego, and she is also the support of all. Since this Prakṛti becomes creative only because of the Absolute Reality, it is said that the Ultimate Reality is the ground of all the products of Prakṛti, and that the entire universe partakes of the nature of the Absolute.

6. In a different context, the *Prapañcasāra* observes that Brahman is beatitude, truth, knowledge, and consciousness, and that, therefore, it is *bhūḥ, bhuvaḥ,* and *svaḥ*. *Bhūḥ* is mere existence; *bhuvaḥ* represents all the elements comprising the universe and their cause; and *svaḥ* is the guide and the self of all this. The Absolute Reality and the world are, therefore, one and the same. They appear to be different when our point of view is altered. It is, therefore, not strange that the Advaitic tradition speaks of six beginningless entities, of which one is the phenomenal existence.[22] Just as the Ultimate Reality is beginningless, so is the world. It is by introducing the principle of time that we designate Reality as beginningless or as changing. But time itself, as the Tantra points out, is born with the activity of Prakṛti.

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[17] *Ibid.*, p. 380.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 709.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 477, line 1.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 477, line 2.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 16.
[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 333, 484.

The Absolute, in itself, is indeterminate, because it is originally not manifested as the pluralistic universe; and yet it is an all-pervasive Reality which wields Māyā. In so far as this Māyā is translated into activity, there arises a distorted or oblique appearance of Reality. As Padmapāda explains it, this '*mūrtyābhāsa*' (appearance of forms) is an appearance which is coextensive with Reality. There can be no appearance outside Reality; and whatever appears is not only an appearance of Reality, but a real appearance. It is a product of the immutable.

The immutable, we are told, is eternal and is immanent in the entire universe. One of the first manifestations of this principle is Prakṛti, which is subtler than the subtlest, which is greater than the greatest, and which pervades all persons and things. At the same time, the *Prapañcasāra* observes that Prakṛti and the world-appearance always pervade even the Creator and the Absolute. There is nothing left untouched by Prakṛti or Māyā. And, as the ultimate Reality, too, comes under the grasp of this principle, the world-appearance is not an unreal fiction, but a hard reality.

Śaṅkara goes a step further and tells us that this Māyā knows herself; she is self-conscious, and none other can know her. It is only the Absolute that may be said to know her and this is only when the Absolute comes to have the nature of *kāla*. If *kāla* (time) retains here its usual meaning of time, this would mean that Prakṛti or Māyā is comprehended in the time series, and that, therefore, time is real. But Padmapāda seems to take *kāla* to mean a kind of knowledge or transcendental consciousness. However, we find in this Tantra that *kāla* or time continues to exist in a subtle form even during the state of involution of the world. This, obviously, points to the fact that Prakṛti or Māyā is a real entity; and this real is more or less characterized by space and time. Prakṛti as space (*ākāśa*) becomes active in order to create, and thus arises the interaction of space and time. Out of this space is born air, these two give rise to fire, these three bring forth water, and these four finally bring forth earth; and then are born the animate and the inanimate. After giving an account of this creation, Śaṅkara observes that the world is apprehended by us, only because there was such a fact as creation; and only when we are able to apprehend the universe, can we have apprehension of the *prapañca* (world) in its five-fold aspect. Here the term *prapañca* obviously stands for the system of reality as a whole. Thus, according to the *Prapañcasāra*, the entire universe is a real system, exhibiting coherence at every step; and it is permeated by Prakṛti, which is only the Śakti or Māyā of the Absolute Reality. And this Absolute is not excluded by the system, because it is not any other than Śakti. As Śaṅkara puts it, Śiva and Śakti are one and the same.[23]

7. Viewed in this light, we find some of the ideas expressed in Śaṅkara's *sūtra-bhāṣya* more intelligible and illuminating. The experience of our waking life, he admits, are not unreal, since they are not sublated in any other state of empiricality. When I apprehend a post as a post in my waking moments, this cognition is not contradicted in any manner throughout my empirical life.[24] Even when the individual soul is liberated, the world of plurality is never annihilated. Instead, the prevailing wrong outlook gets corrected. Otherwise, we will have to admit that the moment an individual is liberated, the whole world ceases to exist; and this is impossible of achievement. And if there was a liberated soul in the past, Śaṅkara observes, there cannot be a world now; and this is contrary to our experience.[25]

The world in which we live is a fact of our experience. A liberated soul may come to negate its reality *for himself*. Even then, we have to admit that prior to the emergence of this negation, the world did exist *for him,* the world did have a reality *for him.* After all, to negate something, we must have that something as a fact or as an event prior to that negation.[26] And what a liberated soul can negate is that which cannot have *ultimate* existence, but which lays a claim to such an independent existence.[27] The phenomenal world is not real if, and only if, as Śaṅkara observes, we view it as totally other than the Absolute.[28] In itself, as claiming an independent existence, it is a non-fact; and it is meaningless and illogical to predicate reality or non-reality to what is not a fact.[29]

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[23] *Saundaryalahari*, verse 35; also verses 32 and 23.
[24] V.S.B., p. 555.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 713.

In illusion, the pillar continues to appear as a man, as long as it is not properly cognized to be a pillar. Likewise, says Śaṅkara, the world will remain true for the individual as long as he is under the spell of Māyā.[30] More explicitly does he state that all our empirical activities and cognitions are real and valid till we have a realization of our identity with the Absolute.[31] It is only when we have the Absolute experience that these cognitions cease to be ultimately true. In other words, the liberation that results from knowledge is the liberation of the individual from his erroneous cognitions and experiences. The purpose of the *Prapañcasāra-Tantra* is to provide a method whereby such a liberation can be secured.

8. According to Śaṅkara's idealism, not only the world but also the Absolute is *anirvācya* or inexplicable. The *Prapañcasāra* observes that this inexplicability is due to the fact that it is not an object for a subject. It is self-consciousness which is the ultimate Reality, and it is, as such, not a knowable or explicable object. So is the world self-consciousness when it is considered as the system of Reality. Hence it is that the world conceived as Prakṛti, Māyā, or Śakti is spoken as Ātman, as the unity of the three *guṇas,* as the synthesis of three *lokas* (worlds). This Śakti is said to pervade all space even during the involution of the world. Whether time is operating or not, Reality is thus said to exist as a coherent system of self-consciousness. It is in this light that Reality, conceived as Śakti, is described as '*prapañca-svarūpa*', the form, plan, or organization of the *prapañca* (world). In her gross form, Śakti appears as the transcendental principle, as the God of religious consciousness; and her supreme form is Māyā, a power through which the Absolute as unmanifest crests the universe and makes itself appear to be other than what it really is. The Absolute appears as the world; and this appearance is as much real as any other form of the Absolute. The Śākta (follower of Tantra) visualizes three forms of Reality. The supreme form is beyond any knowledge, and it is felt only in the integral experience; the second is the subtle form called the deity worshipped and meditated upon; and the last is the gross form known as the visible universe. In the last form, we have Reality or consciousness immanent. As a result, Reality cannot be pure thought alone. It includes the non-thought, the non-consciousness. Śaṅkara, therefore, addresses Reality not only as *bodharūpa,* but also as *abodharūpa*: Reality is knowledge and non-knowledge as well. As non-knowledge, it is Māyā or Avidyā which brings about phenomenal existence; and as knowledge, it liberates the individual. Māyā then, is not an illusion, but an essential aspect of Reality.

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[26] *Ibid.*, p. 445.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 456.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 535.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 303.
[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 458, 155.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 462.

THE ETHICO-SOCIAL OUTLOOK IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF THOMAS HILL GREEN

By Srimati Padma Sanyal

Thomas Hill Green (1836-1882) occupies a very important position among the British idealistic thinkers. The history of philosophy is the chief witness of the tremendous contribution that he makes towards the development of English philosophy, and through it, to the philosophical developments of other countries, too, by breaking, for the first time, the wall of narrow conservatism round the field of English philosophy, and thereby, allowing German idealism to commence its mission on the 'Anglo-Saxon soil'. It is really a great service on his part towards English idealism, because it was hitherto totally inaccessible to all sorts of outside influences; and without these, specially without the influence of German idealism, it might not have flourished with full blossoms. Hence it is held that but for the service of this thinker, British idealism would have taken a different course.

Now, if anybody studies Green's philosophy closely and sincerely, he cannot, in any way, deny the fact that he is a true devotee of spiritualism, and this spiritual fervour is ingrained in each and every aspect of his thought. His metaphysics is spiritual through and through and his religion, his ethics, his politics—all are based on this spiritualism or rather on his transcendentalism. Hence it is true that, without a brief reference to his transcendental metaphysics, no discussion of Green's philosophy is complete.

II

For deriving his great inspiration for this type of philosophy, Green went to the idealistic philosophy of Kant and Hegel and to the thought of Aristotle and did not hesitate to go to Christian ethics. His spiritualism has its root mainly in the spiritualism of Immanuel Kant, the German rationalist. Both of them arrive at their spiritualism through a study of the most important epistemological question, such as 'how do we know the world as a well-organized system'. The empiricists like Locke, Hume, and others hold that we experience the world. Hume declares that knowledge is purely empirical—our reason having no part to play in it. Kant, the staunch rationalist is 'roused from his dogmatic slumber' by this Humean declaration and strongly denounces it. He rather makes a counter declaration *'Macht zwar der verstand die Natur'*, i.e. understanding maketh nature. Green is easily attracted to this Kantian declaration. He accepts this principle and extends it a bit further. Kant clearly points out that our understanding makes nature, but it does not create her, because the materials of knowledge are not the creation of mind, but they are supplied by the external reality. The 'thing-in-itself' that affects our senses and our understanding, by supplying the forms and relations, builds up the superstructure of knowledge. Green does not accept the latter portion of the Kantian theory. So he accepts it, but modifies it according to his own bent of mind. He makes the principle of relation the basis of the world. According to him, everywhere in nature the principle of relation reigns supreme without which nothing can exist, because there cannot be any existent reality without relations of space, time, causality, etc. Thus, according to him, the world is not merely a construction, but a creation of mind. But it is not the finite mind of this or that man—it is the eternal self-consciousness that relates everything, itself remaining behind and beyond all sorts of relations. This eternal self-consciousness is the ultimate reality in Green's philosophy. Therefore, out of this self-consciousness evolves everything.[1] Like Kant, he denounces sensationalism of the Humean pattern that strives to eliminate the work of mind from the realm of knowledge and reduces the object of knowledge to bare passive sensation that, ultimately, leads to extreme scepticism. Green declares that the work of the mind is involved in the very existence of the world and, therefore, proves the baselessness of the empiricists' declaration. Green, ultimately, identifies the relational principle of self-consciousness with what religion calls God. This ultimate reality is immaterial and immovable, it is absolutely one with itself and remains beyond any space and time and beyond any causal series.

In Green's system, man and God are very closely related. He says: 'God is a being with whom the human spirit is identical, in the sense that He is all which the human spirit is capable of becoming.'[2] Thus he gives a spiritual status to man. He admits that man is a finite being, but this is not the whole truth of him, because he is potentially an infinite spirit. He vehemently denounces the naturalistic outlook that man is a mere animal, having desires, appetites, etc., and that he has been produced most mechanically and unintelligently by a huge machine, i.e. the universe, without any end or purpose of his own. Against this conventional deterministic tendency of the time, he declares that man is not a mere animal, that he can never be explained in such mechanistic terms as a helpless product of the physical forces. Instead of this, he is a self-conscious being, a self-distinguishing consciousness, having free intelligence and, therefore, can never be explained in terms of natural process. Man, according to him, is a true bearer of knowledge, and in this respect, he is essentially spiritual. Thus he is a peculiar combination of the natural and the supernatural. 'While, on the one hand, his consciousness is throughout empirically conditioned, in the sense that it would not be what at any time it is but for a series of events, sensible or related to sensibility, some of these events in the past history of consciousness, others of these events affecting the animal system organic to consciousness; on the other hand, his consciousness would not be what it is as knowing, or as a subject of intelligent experience but for the self-realization or reproduction in it through processes thus empirically conditioned of an eternal consciousness not existing in time, but the condition of there being an order in time, not an object of experience, but the condition of there being an intelligent experience, and in this sense, not "empirical" but "intelligible".'[3] Thus Green relates man with God most intimately and, at the point where the finitude and incompleteness of man meets his potential infinitude and perfection, begins the moral philosophy of Green.

III

The moral end or the true good of man, according to Thomas Green, is that in which man finds rest and satisfaction and attains this highest end through self-realization or the realization of his moral capabilities through increasing knowledge. So, according to him, self-realization is the *summum bonum* or the highest end of man.

In his conception of morality, he neither drags man to pure animality by considering only his animal side, nor does he lift him to any superhuman level by recognizing only his rationality and by severing sensibility from his life. So he denounces both Hedonism and Rigorism as onesided and, therefore, incomplete theories of morality.

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[1] A similar view is found in the Upaniṣad, which also declares that there is nothing in the universe which, if it is not itself mental, does not presuppose mind: 'There the sun shines not, nor the moon or the stars, nor this lightning either. Where, then, could this fire be? Everything shines only after the shining Spirit; through its light all these shine' (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II.2.15).

[2] *Prologomena to Ethics*, p. 198.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 85. This oneness of man and God has recently been emphasized upon by Gandhiji, who says: 'I believe in the absolute oneness of God and, therefore of humanity. Though we have many bodies, we have but one soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction, but they have the same source.' The Upaniṣads, too, preached the same doctrine long ago, when they equated the Satyam-Jñānam-Anantam with Ātman.

As against the ethical Hedonists, who say that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the highest end of man, Green's objection is that no such sum of happiness is possible in human life, because, when we pass from one pleasure to another pleasure, it is vanished. Nor can the successively enjoyed pleasures be summed up. A sum of pleasures 'successively felt or enjoyed'. is, in his opinion, a non-entity.

He denounces Kantian Rigorism, too, on the ground that it takes into account only the rationality of man as his essential nature and totally severs sensibility from his life, as Kant regards it to be the relic of animality in human life. Kant is of opinion that, as reason is the essence of human nature, only the life of reason should be cultivated and that sensibility or, in other words, animality should have no place in his life.

But Green, like a true humanist, takes into account both sensibility and reason as constituent elements of the true nature of man and joins hands with Aristotle and Hegel. Because he clearly sees that 'Aristotle, though he asserts the Platonic distinction of the rational and the irrational, conceives of man's virtuous life as a full orbed life which, while it is in accordance with right reason, embraces sensibility as well'. Hegel, also, does not take any partial aspect of man as constituting his entire nature. Because we know very well that by a 'person' Hegel means our higher or rational self by transmuting our lower or animal self into it. Thus these thinkers, though they recognize the supremacy of reason in human life, do not negate his sensibility in any way. Green's soaring idealistic temperament is easily attracted to this thought, and happily, he joins hands with them and accepts their eudaemonistic conception of morality. Under the banner of this, he reconciles the conflicting attitudes of Hedonism and Rigorism. He strongly asserts that there cannot be any doubt about the fact that man, as an animal organism, has desires, passions, appetites, etc., but the point is this that all these instincts are to be guided by the principle of reason and that our moral life does not require the extirpation of any of our faculties, either rational or sensible.

From the very beginning, he points out that our moral life is that in which 'through certain media and under certain consequent limitations, but with the constant characteristic of self-consciousness and self-objectification, the one divine mind gradually reproduces itself in the human soul'. 'By virtue of this principle in him, man has definite capabilities, the realization of which, since in it alone he can satisfy himself, forms his true good.'[4] Therefore, the realization of these moral capabilities is the *summum bonum* of man. But in Green's system, this does not seem to be a very difficult process, because man has a natural aptitude for self-realization. Due to the presence of the divine principle in him, he cannot remain content with what he actually is. He always feels some cravings—some irresistible urge. He asserts that it is man's vocation 'to make himself what he has the possibility of becoming, but actually is not, and hence not merely like the plant or animal, undergoes a process of development, but seeks to and does develop himself'.[5] Thus it is a most distinguishing feature of man's moral life that 'it is governed by the consciousness of there being some perfection, which has to be attained, some vocation which has to be fulfilled, some law which has to be obeyed, something absolutely desirable, whatever the individual may, for the time, desire; that it is in ministering to such an end that the agent seeks to satisfy himself'.[6] Of course, Green admits the fact that we do not actually know what that ideal life, in its perfection, is but the very conviction that it is real and that we are capable of attaining it makes our moral life possible.

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[4] *Ibid.*, p. 206.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 199.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 201.

IV

Green's ethics is essentially social. According to him, man being essentially a social being, all his self-development—i.e. development of his self from less perfect to more perfect, from the animal life to his ideal development, from his finite to his spiritual development is possible only through some society. This social nature of man has also been emphasized upon by Bradley, J. Royce, and other idealistic thinkers. According to them, too, man's moral development is possible only in and through some society, as a member of some community. In a right dialectic fashion Green, too, says that man can never be an isolated individual, but a thoroughly social being. And all his moral actions are to be performed in some society—all his moral ends are to be attained in and through some society. According to him, the principle of self-consciousness is the fundamental fact in human nature and that this principle partakes of the character of the ultimate reality and that what is true of one individual is also true of all. Man, being essentially a social being, constantly affects as well as is himself affected, by the manifold interests of the other members of his society. So the moral action of a man does not merely mean the attainment of his own individual excellence. On the contrary, it must affect the morality of other members of his community as well. Now, the fact that human nature is universal is the source of the idea of a permanent good which is never private to this or that individual. The conception of particular individuals and the distinction between 'good for self' and 'good for others' form no part of his system. In his system, none can gain at the cost of other members of his community, and naturally, he does not seek anything which is purely private to himself and attempts to attain his own progress through the progress of others. Green clearly points out: 'It must constantly be borne in mind, in saying that the human spirit can only realize itself, that the divine idea of man can only be fulfilled in and through persons, we are not denying, but affirming that the realization and fulfilment can only take place in and through some society. Without society, no person; this is as true as that without persons, without self-objectifying agents, there could be no such society as we know. Such society is founded on the recognition by persons of each other, and their interests in each other, as persons. ... They are interested in each other as persons, in so far as each, being aware that another presents his own self-satisfaction to himself as an object, finds satisfaction for himself in procuring or witnessing the self-satisfaction of the other.'[7]

He bestows freedom on the individuals, but does not do it in this sense that man can develop himself in any way he likes, but in the sense of pursuing the goal of moral and spiritual self-realization, and such self-realization is to be achieved through the performance of 'common good', by which Green means such good, in which the individual does not distinguish between 'good for self' and 'good for others'. 'It is', he says, 'a man's thought of himself as permanent that gives rise to the idea of such good (i.e. social good not private to the man himself), and the thought of himself as permanent is inseparable from an identification of himself with others in whose continued life he contemplates himself as living. ... Hence the distinction commonly supposed to exist between ... good for self and good for others has never entered into that idea of a true good on which moral judgements are founded.'[8] This idea of common good thus plays a tremendous role in his philosophy.

Green, being a social philosopher, makes society responsible for the moral development of man. He says: 'It is only as living in community, as sharing the life of others, as incorporated in the continuous being of a family or nation, of a state or a church, that he can sustain himself in that thought of his own permanence, to which the thought of permanent well-being is correlative.'[9] Therefore, without realizing the demands of God through his fellow man in his society, it is hardly possible for a man to realize it in his own life. So, it is, according to Green, the most important condition of man's moral development that he should stand in a 'relation to some group of persons whose well-being he takes to be as his own and in whom he is interested in being interested in himself'.[10] He should feel in the very core of his heart that the service to man is a bounden duty to everyman, that 'there is a duty of every man to every man; and that he should know well that it is impossible for him to attain any desired goal by neglecting this fundamental duty'. This, of course, is also the main theme of the social philosophy of Bradley who, in his famous *Ethical Studies* (p. 185), clearly says: 'In the community is the individual realized. ... The work of the individual for his needs is a satisfaction of the needs of others as much as of his own; he attains this satisfaction of his own only through the work of others.'

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[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 217-18.
[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 271-72.

Here, we are to note an important point that, though Green rejects utilitarianism as an ethical doctrine, yet he admits the fact that they improved the standard of social action by 'insisting that it is the greater number whose highest good is to be taken into account'.[11] Society, therefore, in Green's opinion, is a most indispensable condition for the moral life of man; for, however much he may lay stress on the spiritual man, he admits the fact that man in the world is a mere finite animal organism, and in that respect, he is incomplete and imperfect. It is only potentially that he is perfect and spiritual. But he has a scope for reaching that potential spirituality and perfection by overcoming all the handicaps of his finitude and the way to that goal is his sincere service to humanity.

Of course, we should remember that Green nowhere says that the society or State makes its members moral; rather, he says that the State simply helps his moral life by removing the different physical hindrances that may obstruct his leading a moral life. 'The function of the Government', he says, 'is to maintain conditions of life in which morality shall be possible.' . The primary function of the State is to establish the minimum condition without which morality can hardly be attained. At this point, the ethico-religious point of Green's philosophy becomes very clear; for, according to him, God realizes Himself through the self-realization of man, and man thus, through his own self-realization, fulfils this divine purpose. Therefore, man has a right to an opportunity for the fulfilment of this divine purpose. And it is the State or society, of which he is a member, that is to guarantee that right—the right to live the good life. 'The capacity for rights, then, being a capacity for spontaneous action, regulated by a conception of common good, ... is a capacity which cannot be generated; ... which, on the contrary, is neutralized by any influences that interfere with the spontaneous action of social interest. ... For this reason, the effectual action of the State, i.e. the community as acting through law for the promotion of habits of true citizenship seems necessarily to be confined to the removal of obstacles.'[12] In accordance with his metaphysical doctrine, in his political theory, too, he says that the State emerges out of the consciousness of a common good. 'Human consciousness postulates liberty, liberty postulates rights, and rights demand the State', because, without being a member of some State, nobody can have any right. He vehemently denounces the conception of the existence of rights possessed by man in some pre-social condition of life.

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[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 272-73.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 233.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 384.

[12] *Principles of Political Obligation*, pp. 208-9.

Society helps man through various laws and institutions in which the 'collective mind' is embodied, and it is the duty of each member of society to recognize and respect each other's rights which are powers. Man, as a moral being, can fulfil his various vocations only through the use of these powers secured to him.

The State, sometimes, uses force in order to maintain law and order within the State, and Green supports it only for the purpose which it fulfils. He also says that man should obey the powers of the State, in so far as they facilitate the realization of his ethical ideals, but he very strongly declares that force should not be the basis of the State.

Green supports all that supports humanity or helps its moral life. According to him, the rights of life and liberty are the fundamental rights of man and they make it a duty of the State to guarantee them. He does not support anything that annuls these fundamental rights of man. He feels from the very core of his heart that these fundamental rights of man are annulled by war, because in spite of the facts that 'it may not be a case of mere murder, that it may satisfy some private interests of some States, or it may elicit the spirit of patriotism', he clearly sees that it, in most cases, utterly exhausts human capacities and drains his life blood. So he prays not only for the end of war, but for the extinction of the very spirit of war. Here, of course, he deviates from the path of Hegel who might have worshipped war as it reveals the omnipotence of the State in its individuality.

He is liberal towards the practice of punishment. He sees that, though the rights of life and liberty are sometimes infringed by punishment, it sometimes helps the members of the State by removing the bad elements from the path of their moral development. So he supports punishment, but declares that the aim of punishment must be not to extinguish the man concerned, but to help him regain his sense of truth, beauty, and goodness.

He justifies the existence of some socio-political institutions, such as education, existence of private property, family, marriage, etc., in so far as they contribute to the development of man's moral character. He knows that ignorance is a hindrance to man's development, and therefore, it must be removed by the State by making education compulsory, and this is welcomed by all the great men of the modern world.

Thus we see that the ethico-social outlook of Thomas Hill Green is greatly affected by his transcendentalism. It is fundamentally based on, and it ultimately led to, his metaphysical conceptions. His metaphysics says that the principle of self-consciousness is the ultimate reality which is the basis of the existent world. This self-consciousness is ultimately identified by Green with God who uses man as His vehicle for reproducing Himself. His moral philosophy is concerned with the realization of the potential spirituality, the self-consciousness in man; and his social philosophy is to provide an atmosphere in which self-realization is possible. Truly, He is an idealistic thinker, and his philosophy is refracted by the prism of his spiritualism.

But a series of objections have been thrown from different quarters against Green's thoughts. It is sometimes doubted whether the unity of human consciousness can be maintained if it is divided into the divine consciousness which is out of time and the finite consciousness which is in time. Sidgwick points out that there is a great gap to be filled up in passing from his metaphysics to his ethics.

Again, as against his conception of 'social good', we can point out that we can hardly understand how 'my own' is to be identified with the good of others—either by a self-distinguishing consciousness or by sympathy?

Again, Green seems to say that, without society, no self-realization, no self-development is possible. But we know that there is an aspect of human nature which does not directly require the help of community. Such self-realization was attained by Buddha, Śrī Caitanya, and other sages.

But, in spite of these cogent objections, we remember with great respect the great contribution that Thomas Hill Green has made towards philosophical development in the world.

YANKA KUPALA

By Mr. Mikhas Lynkov

Byelorussia, where the poet Yanka Kupala was born, was once a country of forests and marshes, a remote country whose population was needy and bereft of its rights. This, at least, was the idea generally held, and it was not altogether wrong. For the Byelorussians, life was indeed hard and dreary. The grudging earth yielded no more than a meagre harvest; it was also small in area. To complete this picture of Byelorussia as it was before the revolution, it should be mentioned that the population was practically illiterate and lay at the mercy of the superstitions, prejudices, and arbitrary nature of the tsarist administration; with regard to the inhabitants' mother tongue, its use was forbidden in the educational, clerical, and administrative spheres.

Despite this past history, despite the social and national oppression to which it has been subjected, the Byelorussian people, passionately attached to freedom, has managed to safeguard not only its language, but also its faith in itself and in the future. It has preserved the customs, traditions, songs, and legends which are the reflection of its spirituality.

We must know something of this people's past history if we are to understand the sources of the work of Byelorussia's greatest poet, Yanka Kupala. His vocation as poet and statesman was awakened by the revolutionary events of 1905. These events stirred up the mass of the people, aroused their creative powers, taught them to struggle, to take positive action against the sinister forces of tsarism. All the poet's work dating from the revolution is imbued with the ideas, sentiments, and spirit of this period.

Neither the conditions of life in tsarist Russia, hard though they were, nor the violence of the forces of reaction, were able to shake the poet in his convictions. At the very outset of his career, he chose to follow what he judged to be the path of justice—a steep and stony path, that of a militant and revolutionary poet who was to devote his whole life, his whole strength, to the service of his people.

'Yanka Kupala would be happy if his people could attain to happiness', he says in one of his early poems. These memorable lines constituted the poetic and political creed to which he was to remain faithful in his work, at once social and literary. From his earliest poems, published in 1905, to his last works, in which he brands with reproach the executioners and assassins of the Hitler regime, Kupala defends above all else the interests of his people, their happiness, their well-being, their freedom, their independence. Never did he retreat into the narrow sphere of his own personal, intimate feelings. Never did he utter the empty phrases of the aesthete. He has nothing in common with those artisans of literature who, untouched by generous passion, make themselves advocates of art for art's sake, turning their backs on life itself, its joys and sorrows, its countless tragedies, its sunshine and shadows, its contradictions.

Throughout his life, Kupala was aware of an organic bond between himself and his people. Every word he wrote served to strengthen this moral unity.

He came from a modest family of share-crop farmers. All his life, he worked on land which did not belong to him and had to hand over the lion's share of the fruits of his labour to the landowner. Thus, from his youth upwards the future poet knew the bitterness of seeing his rights denied; he witnessed oppression and the humiliation of human dignity. He learnt from experience what is meant by man's exploitation of man, by social inequality, by the oppression of a nation. He developed a hatred of constraint and social injustice; this hatred was to inspire the following austerely beautiful lines, reminiscent of popular epic poetry:

What are these great masses
Moving through forests and marshes?
These are the Byelorussians.
What do they want today, these men
Oppressed for centuries, blind and deaf?
They want to be called men.

These verses, translated into Russian by Maxim Gorky, enjoy a wide popularity. Sensitive and sympathetic, lofty of spirit and generous of heart, Yanka Kupala has become a true champion of the people, an interpreter of their finest thoughts and aspirations.

His poetry is earthly, in the best sense of the word. It is as varied as life itself and, like life, moving and authentic. It has always appealed to the people, because it expresses their real feelings. Whether he is speaking of his village, of harvest time, of the changing seasons, or of a beloved woman, the whole is penetrated with the social preoccupations of the poet.

He condemned severely all works which are out of touch with the people. In an ironic poem entitled *'For Whom These Songs?'*, Yanka Kupala steps for a moment into the shoes of a poet whose works have aroused no popular sympathy. Lying around on dusty shelves, this writer's books are a prey to rats and 'erudite moths'. From time to time he shakes the yellowed, gnawed pages, in quest of Byelorussia's past: 'O my songs', he concludes, 'better were it had you burned rather than suffer such a fate!' In the poem *Harvest*, which describes the work in the fields, the poet exclaims passionately: 'You, too, sow, my brother, . . . but where then is your plough?' Such were the thoughts of the poet-citizen, such his love for the earth, for his people, and his native land.

Yanka Kupala represents a whole period in the life of the Byelorussian nation. His poetry is permeated with these unfailing forces; hence its popularity. This great poet has also been a great civilizer. There is not one facet of labour or of social life in which Kupala has not taken an interest, in which he has not participated. During the months he spent in the country, he studied the progress which the revolution had introduced into rural life and which had altered even the appearance of the villages and the Byelorussian countryside, not to speak of the changes brought about in the material and spiritual state of the peasants. Touching personal relations came to be established between the poet and these peasants, who welcomed him into their midst with warmth and hospitality, as one of themselves. It is not therefore surprising that Yanka Kupala should know the country so well and should sing of it in poems which are admirable for their genuineness and sensibility. These poems have helped in banishing the gloomy past of the Byelorussian peasants.

Kupala was interested in everything that was new in the life of town and country. He welcomed these innovations in the living and moving annals of his poetry, where we find the echo of the tremendous changes brought about by the revolution, in which he himself had taken so active a share.

The people had a deep love for him and an admiration for his songs, so akin to popular songs and legends. His very name is borrowed from folklore. A legend about the fern flowers on Midsummer Night (the feast of St. John) has it that whoever finds this magic flower finds the key to happiness. In adopting the name of this feast, Yanka Kupala's intention was to emphasize his role as an untiring seeker for the happiness of mankind.

Following the creation of Soviet Byelorussia, Yanka Kupala received the title of 'people's poet of the Byelorussian Republic'. He thus became the spokesman of the masses; the hero of his songs is the worker, the true creator of spiritual and material values.

Yanka Kupala is a national poet in the true sense. Byelorussia comes aline in his poems. We hear in them the rustle of forests and cornfields, the tinkling of rustic bells, the song of the harvesters, the melody of the shepherd's flute, the silence of sunset, and the grumbling of the storm. His works bring before our eyes the pale blue of the Byelorussian countryside, the deeper blue of its lakes and flowery fields. They recount the whole history of this nation and—more important still—its thoughts, its aspirations and desires.

Kupala's poetry describes life, habits, traditions; it voices the originality of everyday life, as it has been fashioned by the centuries; it tells of the eternal spirit of life as well as of the essential changes produced by the revolution. At the same time, like all great works, this poetry is of general import, it has gained a place in world literature.

Yanka Kupala's influence remains considerable. Together with his friend Yakop Kolass, people's poet and founder of contemporary literature, he has freed Byelorussian literature from its provincial bounds.

Yanka Kupala has contributed much to the development of the modern Byelorussian language. He has had an undeniable influence on the generations of Byelorussian poets whose master and friend he has been. There is, indeed, no sphere of art—be it drama, prose, music, or painting—which has not come under the beneficent influence of this creative genius.

Such, then, is Yanka Kupala, the national poet of Byelorussia (his real name is Ivan Kominkovich Lutzevich), whose 80th birthday is being celebrated in Byelorussia as a major national holiday.

SISTER NIVEDITA ON EDUCATION IN INDIA

By Brahmachari Chandan

In many countries, the problem of education does not appear to be so complicated as in India. If we look back at the history of nations and the growth of their national life, we can find that almost every nation possesses, in some form or other, one basic system of education which arises from its very soil as the fulfilment of the necessity of that particular nation. The individuals are born and brought up under that educational system, thus creating a common bond of unity between them and a feeling of kinship. As years roll on, advancement of thought brings new outlooks, new trends of mind, and consequently, creates new environments. An educational system prevailing for many years requires to be adjusted with the turn of events. But it requires to be modified in such a way as to help the present generation to imbibe new ideas and go ahead in tune with the progress of the age, at the same time, remaining established in the basic traditions of its past.

India, like other countries, had her own system of education which was developed centuries ago as a result of the enlightened lives of the ancient Aryans, but later on, India had to face harder times. Her educational system was based upon the teachings imparted in the *gurukulas*, in the precincts of the preceptor. A close family-like contact between the teacher and the taught, deep love and respect of the students for the teacher, and cultivation of the supreme virtues like honesty, purity, etc. were considered part and parcel of the education of those times. Gradually, circumstances began to change, when India saw herself passing through different political vicissitudes. Social, political, and educational systems prevailing in the country were trampled upon by the foreign rulers. Not only did they destroy the foundation of Vedic education in the country, but they introduced also a system of education which prevented the intellectual development of the individuals. Seeing herself slowly drifting from her spiritual moorings, India was bewildered and a change seemed almost imperative. Having awakened to the necessity of this change, a passing glance at the bygone days made her despair. The Vedic culture and civilization, upon which was founded the basic structure of India's life, were not only neglected, but germs of foreign elements, basically antagonistic to her life and purpose, were also instilled into her veins and made to flow for the past few centuries. In order to divert the entire course of Indian life into its established channels, reform in education, with its multifarious aspects, appeared greatly necessary. But this presented a serious problem. Could India afford to neglect the impact of the new scientific and technological discoveries to keep pace with the modern world? What should be the basis and method of the new Indian system of education that India needed for her real progress and strength?

To these perplexing questions regarding education in India, constructive answers came from a foreigner, who had completely dedicated her life for the service of the Indian masses. She was Miss Margaret E. Noble, an Irish lady, later known as Sister Nivedita. Having had the privilege of imbuing India's ideas and ideals in the light of her own goal in life from no less a personality than Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-saint of India, she studied the problem from various angles and left behind in her literary works some concrete suggestions for the workers in the field of Indian education. Her suggestions, which are the products of her deep understanding and keen vision, appear in the present context to possess immense value.

To make education a common treasure to be shared by many, it is necessary that all should be given equal opportunity to gain access to it. Education and its purpose should be defined properly and its functions should be fully explained. The conception of education as borne by many is that it is acquiring or imparting different systems of knowledge which are various kinds of information regarding men and matters. Contrary to this, Sister Nivedita compared education to mining. Two things are implied in this conception. First, a big mine of, say, coal remains hidden from the notice of man, which corresponds to the treasure-house of knowledge lying imbedded in the very constitution of the human mind; and secondly, there is a process of digging it up on to the surface for its utilization in various ways, which corresponds to bringing out the latent ideas in the human mind to the conscious level. The process needs the help of external accesories. A big storehouse of coal lying underground requires to be discovered before being pulled up by machines. Similar is the case with the human mind. It must know and be conscious of the infinite amount of knowledge lying within it. Diving deep within the human mind brings into view those thoughts which are akin to one's own ideals. Ideas follow according to one's subjective tendencies, which are the basis, the substratum of one's thought pattern. Accordingly, education is not acquiring knowledge which is foreign to one's thought pattern, nor merely reproducing the inherent ideas of the mind, but a blending of both. Education is a function which makes the inner ideas manifest when they become related to external ancillaries, both theoretical and practical. The product, i.e., learning or knowledge, is something new, closely related to both these factors, but not a replica of either. We, therefore, find that education is a manifestation of the inner faculties of man in the context of the world around him.

Thus looked at, the problem of mass education can be solved through a method advocated by Sister Nivedita. She found that the custom of alms-giving is inherent to India's culture. She felt that this can be extended into the field of education, too, in the form of *vidyā-dāna* or imparting of education to the masses in a spirit of sacrifice. This concrete method has already been worked out in the West and has produced results. Like the aggresive spirit of religion, Nivedita wanted to transplant the Western idea of an army of teachers. These student teachers, being well educated, are to render free educational service for several years to the masses, without any idea of remuneration in any way. Success on the part of these student-teachers in this line will act as an inspiration to coming generations and will encourage a spirit of of service and co-operation. The students of today will be the teachers of tomorrow, and in this way, propagation of education can be maintained at a steady pace.

There is a general opinion that, like other departments of national life, education, too, should be an affair of the State. It is for the State to find out ways and means and arrange for the spread of education among the masses. But Sister Nivedita felt that this solution to the problem was unsuitable to India, specially in a period when the vital problems like food, finance, etc. kept the Government busy. Appealing to the human spirit of love and fellow-feeling, she hoped that it was only the students and the people, and their mutual co-operation and sense of sacrifice, which could help in this respect.

A slogan is current these days in the country, especially among the youths, that the educational system should be revitalized. It demands that all the old methods should be rooted out and that the educational system should be cast into a new mould. The reason is not far to seek. The old methods being impracticable in the modern set-up, the execution of those systems hardly brings any desirable effect. Just as different regimes in a country see the same problem from different angles, so also the same problem is dealt with differently at different times. To this, Sister Nivedita would have replied thus: It is true that the old methods cannot be retained *in toto* as the trend of mind of individuals changes from age to age. So the methods planned two centuries ago will not, necessarily, suit the present age. Again, the formulae and experiments of the present time will be obsolete in future. In spite of this fact, every nation must retain its basic character with which the masses have got a kinship, and then proceed along these lines with the march of time.

As regards the early methods of Indian teaching, Sister Nivedita appreciated the Hindu emphasis on training the mind, but at the same time, she deplored the lack of altruistic attitude in it. On the other hand, West's superiority lay in the fact that it stressed the need of united effort in all problems. But its efforts were confined to the method, ignoring the goal. Now, as long as Indians retain the principle of training the mind and preservation of energy, their potentialities for success in any path will remain with them, as their ancients had shown in the field of science, arts, medicine, astronomy, etc. If to this the Western idea of organizing the mass mind is added—if men are made conscious of the need for extending their attitude of sacrifice to the cause of the country—then education in India can have an enduring solution. The greater idea of extending one's helping hand from the family to the neighbour, and thence to the society, does not bring bondage to one; rather, it leads one into the path of freedom. India has always extolled the value of training the powers of the mind. Europe has glorified herself by substituting the common good for the individual good. By adding the latter to the former, by the blending of the altruistic idea of common education with the Indian process of training the mind and preservation of energy, the much disputed problems of Indian education may find their solution.

In education, the training of different faculties of the intellect are of special importance. When a man accepts nature naively, i.e. when he does not question what is given to him, his mode of behaviour is said to be passive. But if he questions the facts and things that come under his purview and modifies them as the situation demands, his action is said to be motivated by the active function of the intellect. Similarly, when the boys are taught to train the different faculties of the mind, education to them will be not only to learn what is needed in their day-to-day life, but also to cultivate the good qualities like heroism, truthfulness, sacrificing attitude, etc. Education will not be like swallowing a bitter pill, but a creative participation in moulding one's own character. The pupils, educated thus, will be imbued with a trait 'to feel nobly, to choose loftily and honestly' and they will become the assets of the country.

When education means only book-learning, its scope is limited and the value of such education becomes negligible. Such education does neither teach us the aim and purpose of a worthy life, nor does it help in the growth of altruistic qualities. Sister Nivedita was of the view that education should not be merely informative or fact-finding and individualistic, but it should be nationalistic and altruistic. True education is learning and grasping the truth about various things and then translating them in one's own life. Her theory of education strives to overcome the defects of the empiricist and rationalistic theories. The empirical view does not take into account the rational constitution of man's mind and its innate tendencies which play a great role in shaping objective knowledge to subjective patterns, and therefore, it is unable to explain the variations from man to man in the understanding of objective truths. A rationalistic approach, on the other hand, has man's inherent ideas alone as its key, and therefore, cannot help towards the expansion of man's knowledge. But Nivedita's critical theory serves the purpose of both these theories, while eliminating their defects. It keeps the door open for expansion of knowledge by showing that objective truths, viewed in a subjective manner, differentiate them only in degree, and not in kind.

The above is a general outline of what Sister Nivedita meant by education and its scope of application to India. On being examined, it is found to be throbbing with the ideas of Swami Vivekananda regarding education in India. He had always stressed the value and importance of introducing the true spirit of the Vedic system of education and wanted to see the youths of the country trained not only intellectually, but morally too. The principles of training of mind and *brahmacarya*, advocated by Sister Nivedita, are an echo of her Master. A sense of co-operation and sacrifice, which were sorely wanting in India, were to be coupled with the individual training on the intellectual and moral plane. Thus Sister Nivedita wanted to see the youths of the country blossom physically, intellectually, and morally, by giving them a comprehensive education on the individual and collective level.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Dr. Shashi Bhusan Das Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., of Calcutta, whose learned book on *śakti-sādhanā* has recently been awarded the President's prize, writes this month on the 'Śakti-sādhanā of Sri Ramakrishna' on a wide background of historical evolution of the cult of *śakti-sādhanā*, especially in Bengal. The learned contributor shows how 'in Sri Ramakrishna, we find the consummation of spiritual efforts and realizations of his predecessors'. . . .

Dr. P. S. Sastri, M.A., M.Litt., Ph.D., Head of the Department of English, Nagpur University, in his learned article published in this issue, deals with Śaṅkara's conception of the world on the basis of his *Prapañcasāra-Tantra*. He says that, according to the *Prapañcasāra*, the entire universe is a real system, exhibiting coherence at every step; and it is permeated by Prakṛti, which is only Śakti or Māyā, an essential aspect of the Absolute Reality. Dr. Sastri shows that this view of the Ācārya finds corroboration in his commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra*, also. . . .

Thomas Hill Green is regarded as one of the most important of idealistic philosophers of the nineteenth century. According to Green, every experience takes place by forming relations with time, space, etc., and they are the real elements of that which is regarded as sensation; and since relations are the work of the human mind, reality is characterized as essentially spiritual. Srimati Padma Sanyal, M.A., a research student in the University of Calcutta, deals, in her article, with the ethico-social outlook in Green's philosophy, and that she does well. . . .

Yanka Kupala is the national poet of Byelorussia. Mr. Mikhas Lynkov, national writer of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, in his beautiful article on the poet, whose 80th birthday is being observed as a national festival in Byelorussia, shows what great influence he has effected on the life and literature of the people of his land, and how he has transgressed the local bounds to stand in line with the great poets of all lands. The article has been kindly sent to us by the UNESCO for publication in *Prabuddha Bharata*. We hope it will be found informative and interesting. . . .

Brahmachari Chandan, of Belur Math, in his article on 'Sister Nivedita on Education in India', discusses some of the educational ideas of the Sister, with particular reference to India. The Sister was an educationist of repute, and her identification with this land of her adoption, naturally, made her think deeply about its needs and their fulfilment. Her educational ideas are of particular importance in this respect and will be found helpful for those who desire to work in the field of education.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

BENGALI

VEDA-MĪMĀMSĀ, PART I (A VEDIC COMPENDIUM). BY ANIRVAN. *Published by the Principal, Sanskrit College, 1 Bankim Chatterjee Street, Calcutta-12. 1961. Pages 240. Price Rs. 10.*

The Sanskrit College of Calcutta has to its credit quite a number of valuable publications, to which the present volume is a noteworthy addition. This volume is only a precursor of a more ambitious scheme aiming at placing before the public a fresh spiritual interpretation of the Vedic *mantras*, which the author promises to undertake, after writing a second volume about Vedic deities, spiritual practices, life, philosophy, etc. The book under review convinces the readers of the need of a fresh systematic approach for discovering the spiritual significance of the *mantras*, and then, by way of introduction to further study, it acquaints him with the broad outlines of the Vedic literature. Thus the Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, and the Upaniṣads are summarized in 167 pages. Each point dealt with here is supported by exhaustive references to other Vedic texts. In the earlier 46 pages, the author notes that, though the Brāhmaṇas offer a sort of explanation of some of the *mantras*, they are really concerned with their practical application in sacrifices etc., and as such, these explanations are neither exhaustive nor comprehensive. The commentators like Sāyaṇa, also, had only that kind of idea at the back of their minds, so that the *mantras* do not yield their fullest spiritual purport even in these scholarly writings. But, from the hints dropped here and there by them, it becomes obvious that they did not rule out other mystic interpretations and were, in fact, themselves aware of these. The European scholars, on the other hand, and the modern schools of Indologists following in their footsteps, find nothing in these hymns but nature worship and the crude beginning of religion. The scope and need for a spiritual interpretation is, therefore, very great indeed.

The author has not fully indicated what line of interpretation he will follow. All that we are told directly or indirectly is that Sri Aurobindo gave certain indications of a new approach in his writings, and the Pondicherry school has been working on these. We are also told that the Vedic *mantras* are capable of symbological meanings. This, of course, is not quite a new approach, for others made the same attempt years ago. Neither is the interpretation of the *mantras* by giving spiritual meanings to their words quite new. Sāyaṇa and others adopted this method long ago. For instance, Sāyaṇa says that *soma* is Brahman in the derivative sense of 'he who coexists with *umā* or *brahma-vidyā*'. The word '*Samudra*' is explained in the sense of Brahman. The word '*indra*' is interpreted in the Upaniṣad to mean Brahman. Even so, a fresh systematic attempt at interpreting the *mantras* as a whole, from the spiritual point of view, is quite welcome.

Certain remarks made by the author regarding the spiritual standpoints of the seers of the Saṁhitās and the Upaniṣads make us rather critical. There are certain other philosophical assertions with which we cannot fully agree. We realize that divergence of opinion is bound to crop up. The readers will easily forget these if the explanations themselves are reasonable, consistent, and spiritually uplifting. We would only request the author not to be consciously dogmatic about the philosophical standpoint around which he reconstructs the inner meaning of the Vedas. In the meantime, we shall reserve our opinion till the whole work is placed before the public.

S. G

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA KANPUR, U.P.

Report from April 1961 to March 1962

The following were the activities of this centre for the year under review:

(1) *Spiritual and Cultural*: Regular worship, prayer, and meditation were held in the Ashrama shrine. Religious classes were held in varoius parts of the city on Sunday mornings, and at the Ashrama on Sunday evenings. Besides these, many religious and cultural meetings were addressed by the monastic members, and the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda were observed elaborately. A new feature of these functions, in the form of speech and essay competitions for school and college students, was introduced in 1961.

(2) *Educational*: The Higher Secondary School for boys, run by the Ashrama, enrolled 537 students in 1961-62. The High School result was 94 per cent passes. Out of 71 students sent up for S.S.C. examination, 6 secured first, 49 second, and 12 third divisions. Five students were in the State merit list. The School has extensive facilities for bringing about an integrated growth of the students through co-curricular activities, physical training, A.C.C., moral education, etc.

The school building added four more rooms on the second floor during the year. The library for children and the general public contained 5,732 volumes on 31st March 1962. During the period under review, 2,5 books were issued to the students and the public. The reading room receives seventeen magazines and eight newspapers.

(3) *Medical*: The charitable hospital treated 1,56,1 patients during the year. Of these, more than 80 per cent were women and children. The hospital handled 1,879 major and minor surgical operations. Eye patients operated upon were kept in the indoor department for short periods.

Needs: (i) For the proposed kitchen block, a sum of Rs. 25,000; (ii) A building to house the Ashrama library at a cost of Rs. 35,000; (iii) An amount of Rs. 24,228 to complete the third storey of the unfinished school building; (iv) Equipments etc. for science and biology laboratories and museum: Rs. 15,000.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S BIRTHDAY

The 128th birthday of Sri Ramakrishna falls on Monday, the 25th February 1963.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVIII MARCH 1963 No. 3

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—:o:—

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Allahabad Math, January 11, 1925

There was a gathering of many distinguished devotees who had come all eager for Swami Vijnanandaji's holy company. A certain devotee had been given by Maharaj a copy of *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* and another book on Tantra, written in English. Maharaj asked him: 'How did you find these books?'

The devotee: 'I haven't gone through the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* yet. I have read the other one and am now at the last chapter. You have marked the important passages throughout the book. The language is very good, and the writer seems to be an erudite scholar.'

Maharaj: 'Yes, it is well-written, undoubtedly. But do you know what I feel about it? Such erudition does not seem to be worth the name. Where is that pure and comprehending life? There is no harmony between preaching and practice. It looks to me like a parody of religion. Such erudition is ultimately worthless. As the Master used to say: "Kites and vultures soar very high up in the air, but have their gaze fixed on the earth down below, at evil-smelling carrion." Our ancient sages were endowed with self-restraint in every sphere. They had attained the realization of Truth and had gained insight into the past, present, and future. They have shown the way of It to all. Behind what they have said was their wonderful life. Religion is not a matter of discursive reasoning or scholarship; it is a matter of experience. What a great philosopher Kant was! But he said that marriage was a necessity. He spoke as he felt. But Kant was a man of very regular habits. Punctuality was such a prominent trait in his character that people used to set their watches by the hour of his morning walk. There is one thing, however, over which I feel deeply annoyed with him. His philosophy approximates closely to Advaitic (non-dualistic) theory. But, at the same time, he says that Hindus got their religion from Europeans, the idea being that Hindus owe everything to them. They want to prove that they are superior to us in every respect, and whatever we have learnt is all from them.'

* * *

Reciting an English poem, Swami Vijnanandaji said: 'The words seem to come out of a heart that is frustrated and filled with despair.'

The devotee: 'But it is applicable to many persons. The words are based on a large number of events as they happened in the world, and that is why they are so relevant and touching.'

Maharaj: 'Indeed, it is so. But there are two things which enter into it. One is fate and the other is human effort. Mahākāla is the lord of time. What the Westerners call fate or destiny, we characterize as the result of our actions in previous births. The river of time is flowing on. Will it only do to be drifting with the current? You have got to cross that river and you can go across, only when you swim with the help of that current. Never give way to despair and dejection. Without perseverance, nothing great can be achieved. The aim of life is to realize God, and the task is not easy. You must steer you are nearly across, you have to clear of laziness and insincerity. Even when persist in your efforts and go on swimming, or else you will be sucked in by the currents and drowned. If you put your whole heart into it, God will give you immense, infinite strength, and you will reach the *terra firma*. What is true of personal life is also true of a nation. How many empires have disappeared into the limbo of oblivion! We, too, will share the same fate, if our countrymen do not come forward to serve the country, each according to his own capabilities. The country belongs to all, not to any particular individual. Whatever situation one may be in, one can, to some degree, serve the motherland, serve the common people, and above all, serve God. Always have the good of the universe at heart and let this become a part of your daily prayer.

'A public worker must be honest and above reproach. Don't find fault with others. Rather look at your own faults. Once, while I was at Belur, a gentleman came and expressed his regret that we had not married and had renounced the world. By all sorts of arguments, he demonstrated that our supreme Guru (Śiva) was also married; He, too, had Pārvatī as his spouse. The gentleman's point was that the householder's life is the best, and by not adopting it, we were insulting religion.'

A devotee: 'Perhaps, the gentleman himself had become a Śiva; his words, therefore, were just like him!' Everyone laughed loudly at it.

Maharaj said: 'But do you know what Rakhal Maharaj said? He said to that gentleman, "You do as you think best"; and, calling me aside, said: "Peshan, let us get away from here. So many people together will only prolong the discussion." I, also, said: "Yes, Maharaj, let us go. Men cannot see, and do not want to see, their own frailties, and they bring forward all sorts of useless arguments to support their own misdeeds."'

Allahabad Math, January 14, 1925

From amongst those who had gathered around Swami Vijnananandaji towards evening, a devotee asked: 'What is the significance, Maharaj, of baths and fasting etc. undertaken on special occasions? Have these any particular religious significance?'

Maharaj: 'Well, though not so much for those who are constantly engaged in the contemplation of God, for ordinary people, these observances are, certainly, of great value, because on these occasions, their minds turn towards God. Besides, certain hours or changes of season exert an influence on the mind; and that is why the scriptures prescribe engaging of the mind in some religious rituals or in introspection on these special occasions. Our holy books advise nothing that is useless; we have only to understand their real import. With our superficial knowledge, we may fail to grasp many things which, however, become clear when we achieve purity of mind.'

A certain gentleman had brought his son with him who had just appeared at a competitive examination. He prayed earnestly to Maharaj for his blessings, and the latter said: 'I bless everybody; but had my blessings efficacy, should I be like this? Crowds of people would, then, be running after me.' But the boy was importunate and very earnestly prayed for his blessings. So, Maharaj said: 'Well, I certainly wish you success. After passing, you will get a big job. But will you then talk to us like this? Perhaps, you will not recognize us even.'

The father and son left after making their obeisance to Swami Vijnananandaji. He then said: 'Government service is such an ignoble thing. I don't want anyone to be subordinate to and dependent on others in government service. Our country is great, and we have such nice young men! But to what a pitiable state we have been reduced! Everybody shouts for more education, but the only result of it is the creation of a set of slavish job seekers. Men of real genius have no use for this kind of education. Modern English education has created a slave mentality among us. Akbar, Ranjit Singh, Śivāji—all of them were practically illiterate people. Our Master himself was a man of little education and attached no value to book-learning. He wanted man to imbibe learning from God's own words. He looked askance at bookish knowledge. A marvellous man was he, one who shed lustre on the land that gave him birth. And, personally, I myself was extremely lucky in that I came in contact with him. A mere glance at him was enough to convince anyone that he was a shining embodiment of purity. I say this, not because I am one of his devotees. But, indeed, I have never come across a person of such childlike sincerity. He used to be always in an abstracted mood, with the nerve current constantly upwards. During his illness, if someone said that a particular medicine would do him good, he would immediately put his trust in him, like a child believing everything that another person said. He would send at once for Ramlal and instruct him to get that medicine as a certain person had assured him that it would cure him. Trust and disbelief came to him as naturally as to a child. If the prescribed medicine failed to effect a cure, he would tell the person who had suggested it that what he had said was wrong and he would not trust him again. Therefore, one had to be very careful in speaking to him. Who among us has understood him properly?

'It was evident to anyone who saw him that he looked at the affairs of the world with strange amazement. He wondered that people could be so much engrossed in the world's momentary happiness, oblivious of the eternal joy. His moods were unique. Any discussion of something holy would throw him into a trance. He could not bear the touch of metallic things at all; contact with them would result in contraction of his nerves, just as it is the case with us when pricked by thorns. He would consider worldly wealth as mere trash. To him, the only object in life was God-realization; the existence or non-existence of the world was to him a matter of no consequence. The *Kathāmṛta* (*The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*) gives a good idea of the Master's outlook; this book by Master Mahasaya (Sri Mahendranath Gupta) is of eternal value.'

As the hour was late, the assembled people were asked to leave. They bowed before Swamiji, and he blessed them saying: 'May all go well with you.' Then, he said again: "My good wishes are somewhat different from the Master's. I wish for your worldly happiness, while he wished people to have faith in, and devotion to God and to attain Self-realization, and so on.'

Allahabad Math, December 13, 1925

On Swami Vijnananandaji's expressing a desire to visit the Congress Session at Kanpur, one amongst the assembled devotees asked: 'Is it so very essential that you should visit the Congress?'

In a lighter vein, he said: 'Oh yes, certainly. I am getting old and if I don't see it, how can I account myself to God when He would ask me about it?' Then, becoming serious, he said: 'Where so many people gather together to do some good work, it is just another form of worship. Organized work is also a worship. Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) never criticized the work of the Congress. After all, they seek the good of the country, don't they? In unity is the manifestation of the power of God. I feel that our country is going to rise again. Many nations have gradually achieved prosperity and power—America, Japan, China, and so on. And now the wheel is turning in favour of India. Our hope lies in every individual citizen. Every Indian will have to qualify himself to become a leader of men; that means he has to be a man of character—selfless, high-souled, large-hearted—and he has to love his countrymen. We have to train ourselves to work for the good of the people. One has to exercise self-restraint and remember God. He will give us strength to act.

'One reason for the decadence of our country is that, in the name of religion, people put forward harmful theories, as a result of which people lose their faith in religion itself. Simplicity, truthfulness, and purity of heart are called for. Jesus Christ had no weapons to fight with and suffered crucifixion for the sake of truth. We, also, have to do likewise, and then only will rise again the sun of India's glory.'

* * *

'From the sun and moon come purifying and strengthening currents. Our scriptures prescribe the meditation of Nārāyaṇa inside the solar region with His attributes and adornments of golden crown and ear-rings, of the conch and the *cakra* (the wheel of destruction), and the club and the lotus. Meditation is prescribed in the solar region. The conch is the symbol of the primeval voice, the '*Om*'. The wheel represents evolution, while the club (*gadā*) expresses strength of restraint, and the lotus means the creative power. These, of course, are spiritual explanations. I am describing them as I feel about them.

'Similarly, there are spiritual explanations of the five 'Ms' (*pañca-makāras*). According to this, *madya* (wine) represents intoxication through god-consciousness. As Rāmaprasāda has said: "I don't drink wine, I take the nectar of Mother Kālī's name and become intoxicated." Likewise, *māṁsa* (meat) would express the joy of controlling one's appetite, and *matsya* (fish) the currents of Iḍā, Piṅgalā, and Suṣumṇā that go up the body. *Mudrā* (posture) would represent the joy of controlling the senses, and *maithuna* would mean the union of the Jivātman (soul inside the living body) with the Paramātman (the Divine Person).

'Likewise, there have been spiritual interpretations of *ratha-yātrā* and *snāna-yātrā* (the Lord's Festival of Car and the Festival of Bathing). Whoever seats God inside the chariot of the body derives the joy of the Car Festival. In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, also, it is written that the body is a chariot and the soul is the charioteer. The 'Festival of Bathing' means dipping oneself in the water of noble and sacred thoughts.

'There is, also, spiritual interpretation of '*āvaraṇa-devatā*' (the God as veil). Do you know what is *āvaraṇa-devatā*? It is the umbraic and penumbraic (or reflected) light. Thus the Lord, including Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī, are effulgent deities, while gods like Indra and devotees like Nārada are penumbraic and umbraic deities. So also are Lord Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā and her companions.'

* * *

'You have to invoke the Master constantly and surrender yourself completely to him. He will do what he thinks good for you. He will perform his own work. Can we do good to anybody? The Master is one of those souls who stand in the very first category. They know only the Universal Mother. Their outlook is: Her will can work miracles in a trice. Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) and others belong to the second category. They preach the ideas of those who belong to the first category. To invoke the Master means imbibing some of his virtues. When a man thinks intently on someone else, he comes to acquire some of the virtues of the latter.

'The very first attribute of God is lordliness. Contemplation on Him should enable us to gain lordliness over our passions and become masters of our souls. Secondly, whatever God wills is immediately done. We, also, should have the power to translate our wishes into action. Thirdly, God is love. As He loves everyone, so should we love all created beings. One is invoking God's name properly, to the extent that one is able to acquire His attributes.

'The Master used to tell us about Keshab Chandra's oratory. But when he was told about another person's gifts in that direction, he simply turned up his nose. Swamiji's lectures, too, had a special feature. While speaking, he used to forget himself and would become an entirely different person. His speeches touched the core of people's hearts. He had a wonderful personality, and other people became like worms in his presence. I have myself seen in Belur Math distinguished Western disciples of Swamiji squatting on the floor all around his chair and drinking in his inspired words. And how forcefully did he speak! Now things are being done according to what he said, and people are getting inspiration from his words.

'You have to work out your own salvation. Your soul is your greatest friend. In your mind, you should always be thinking of God. There is a Hindi couplet which says that one who prays with his beads is an inferior person, one who prays with his fingers is fit to be our brother, while one who can pray in his mind is the best. My only advice to all is to forsake idleness. An idle brain is the devil's workshop. You must do everything with concentration and diligence, never with an eye to rewards.'

THE CORRECT EMPHASIS

[Editorial]

A common charge against religion is that it turns our mind from the realities of life and makes us run after distant imaginary ideals which hardly stand the test of reason or the validity of proof. To seek after God, to practise religion, is only a wild-goose chase, only a cover under false camouflage. Walter Lippman jocularly voices the view of the educated layman of today, when he says: 'I do not mean that modern men have ceased to believe in God. I do mean that they no longer believe in Him simply and literally. I mean that they have defined and refined their ideas of Him until they can no longer honestly say that He exists, as they would say that their neighbour exists.' The more radical among such men think that the idea of God first came in the minds of primitive men who had no power to reason out things and who were obsessed by a fear complex at the ravages of nature, against which they had nothing to save themselves with. They seem to say: 'Thanks to modern scientific civilization! Now that we have it, God, religion, and the superstitions that go along with them must beat a hasty retreat. We shall correct the mistake done by our ancestors and shall relieve man of toiling under false and foolish notions. In our times, we have gained mastery over air, water, and land. We are trying to conquer the space. Science is about to make an end of diseases and frightening freaks of nature. It will protect us from old age and, perhaps, death. Poverty will vanish from the face of the earth, wealth will be distributed equally, every man will get the maximum of happiness of human life. The mysteries of nature will be revealed, and we shall expose the hollowness of God and claims of religion. Life is not a flight from the problems that face us. No negative looking at life; we shall be positive. We shall emphasize this correct and scientific view of life and drive away the psychology of escapism from the realities of life, which religion mischievously encourages.'

II

It is a fact which cannot be denied that religion, when rightly understood, brings about a change of values in the life of a man. It brings about, as Swami Vivekananda has said, a change in the outlook on, and attitude towards, the world outside of us. A truly religious man does not cling to the world in the same way and with the same avidity as that of a common man. He transcends the sense of bondage which keeps a common man tied to the world and its gains and losses, and he feels a higher call, which on many occasions, lifts him above the common life of an ordinary man, finding joy and bliss in things above the ephemeral. There is nothing bad in it, for Truth is as it really is whether one likes it or not; and the greatest of truths is the realization of that supreme Truth which makes one free from all binding desires to the things of the world. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* clearly says: 'When the heart is freed from all desires dwelling in it, the mortal becomes immortal and fully enjoys Brahman, yea, even in this life' (II.3.14). But that does not mean that realization of this Truth, to which religions are different paths, always makes one dead to the good and evil of the world and callous to the joys and sorrows of one's fellow beings. There are important instances in history when the greatest of realized souls have willingly laid down th lives to the service and good of their l fortunate brethren.

Buddha, after having the gates of bliss *nirvāṇa* opened before him, returned to t service of the millions of souls who were st struggling in the midst of misery. His lo eighty years of life were a dedication to t welfare of humanity in more ways than on History has yet to record a greater for that impelled its followers to engage the selves in all kinds of service not only to t human beings, but even to the animal Christ, who was one with his Father i Heaven, made the sacrifice of a whole life the regeneration of mankind, and the machi ery of benevolent service which he set i motion is working vigorously for all the two thousand years. Śaṅkarācārya, who h gained the supreme knowledge leading t liberation, made hectic efforts to bring t light of that knowledge to all men a women, and what he did within the sho span of his life on earth reads like an u believable saga of energy and action. Rām nuja, after acquiring the key to salvati from Yāmunācārya, ran forth to the peop to cater wide that heavenly secret to all a sundry for their emancipation, even thoug such an action was forbidden to him at th pains of endless hell-fire. Śrī Caitanya, wh was saturated with the love of Kṛṣṇa and w forgetful even of his body in the ecstasy divine joy, ran from door to door aski people to drink of that ambrosia of Hari name and become immortal. Sri Ram krishna, having merged himself in the bea tude of *samādhi*, and always enjoying t great heights of realization, was kept b the Divine Mother on the threshold of th Absolute, and he brought solace to numero scorched and struggling souls and opened way of life which is bringing and is destine to bring light, peace, progress, and joy t humanity at large.

Thus we find in the lives of all great saint that there is always an inner urge for thin transcendent which, in fact, is the reality behind the phenomenal world; still, there is something that links them up with this world of ours, though, at the same time, the values they attach to it are different from ours. Maybe, we do not know exactly the *raison d'etre* of this mysterious contradiction and conflict, if any, for everything of the realm of Spirit cannot be analysed and explained, as all data are not recorded. But, for our understanding of it, in whatever small measure it may be, we shall turn to Swami Vivekananda's life, of which we have a pretty detailed account with us.

Swami Vivekananda, like all true aspirants, goes to Sri Ramakrishna and speaks out the simple desire: 'I want to get merged in in everlasting Beatitude and never return from it.' And what does Sri Ramakrishna, whose mere wish could bring to Vivekananda this supreme gift, do? With a tone, at once affectionate and disapproving, he says: 'I thought you were of a higher order; you, too, are so selfish! Nay, I cannot grant this; for, through you, the Mother will have Her mission accomplished.' Then, was this supreme realization denied to Swami Vivekananda for ever? No. We have it on record that he had his heart's desire fulfilled. But we have it also that, after his first vision of the Ultimate, Sri Ramakrishna had shut the door of *samādhi* on him with the remark that it would be reopened only after the Mother's mission was complete. And what could be the Mother's mission but to serve her teeming children, struggling and scrambling for, and sometimes oblivious also, to the necessity of higher achievements? The contrast between the longing for individual emancipation and the demands of universal service are set forth here in the boldest relief. And what a man of God and religion did was definitely not escaping this world with all its problems and miseries. In speech and action, he manifested an intense feeling for the poor and the downtrodden. In him, the hankering for personal freedom had been replaced by, or shall we say, had evolved into, a varied and unceasing endeavour for the emancipation of humanity as a whole. The individual in him had found its complement in the universal; the truth in the macrocosm and the truth in the microcosm had revealed their identity. In later life, he declared in no uncertain terms that he was ready to be born again and again even as the lowliest creature, if thereby the world could derive the least benefit. And was he the less of a *sannyāsin* when he said this? No, he was only the more of it. He was one with the whole creation. The lure of Himalayan silence is as great to him as his desire to serve the poor. He cannot brook any separation from the Virāt, the cosmic soul. Personal gains and losses count for nought. He serves the world, not because the world demands it, but because the spontaneous outpourings of his heart find there a greater consummation. He is both a *sannyāsin* and a servant of humanity, and that is not because his intellect is forced to a helpless compromise, but because, in his higher vision, the face of Truth has been unveiled and the contrast between the world and God has faded away.

But, though true and inspiring as all this is, reason stands in a fix for its explanation. How can a monist, a believer in the non-existence of plurality, a man ever eager to lose himself in the bliss of supreme Beatitude, still be such a powerful actor on the stage of this chimerical world and have affectionate relationship with all these kaleidoscopic changes? How can a believer in Māyāvāda, which boldly declares that the entire manifested creation, as it is commonly perceived, has its basis only in falseness (*bhrama*), be wedded to the acceptance of the life on earth with its joys and sorrows, successes and failures, rises and falls? We shall try to see if there is really any higher metaphysics, a better meaning of Indian philosophy and religion than what we have commonly understood, which can effect this strange synthesis.

III

The purpose of all philosophy—more so of Indian philosophy—is to make a man rid of the triple sorrows, *ādhyātmika* (intrinsic—bodily or mental), *ādhibhautika* (caused by extrinsic natural influences like beasts, inanimate objects, etc.), *ādhidaivika,* caused by extrinsic supernatural influences such as spirits, *devas,* etc.). The *Sānkhya-Kārikā* clearly says at the very beginning that the origin of philosophy lies in the inquiry into the means of terminating the torment, caused by the three-fold misery (*duḥkha-trayābhighātāj-jijñāsā tadabhighātake hetau*). Indian philosophy and religion rightly emphasize the principle of gradual withdrawal from gross enjoyment of the external world through the senses—for this only adds to our misery and stands in the way of higher joy. This withdrawal has a positive goal in view—the goal of joy eternal. The theory of Māyā, which is the most maligned of all theories on the charge of investing the Indian mind with escapism and pessimistic outlook of life, is really not the outcome of a disgust for life. There is disgust because there is *māyā,* and not *māyā* because there is disgust. Māyāvāda, as Swami Vivekananda has said, is a mere statement of facts.

According to Vedānta, which rests on Māyāvāda, five factors constantly present themselves to our consciousness. Things exist, they give rise to knowledge, and knowledge has joy (or sorrow, if knowledge is wrong) as its counterpart. And, for our perception, things must have name and form. Name and form are of the world and constantly changing, giving rise to plurality. And change and plurality cannot give stability and indivisibility, which must be the nature of real joy—a realization that lasts and remains steady. This realization is the realization of that principle which endows this changing phenomenal world with reality and positivity. That principle is Brahman—of the nature of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. What is denied is accepting this name an form, the changing externals, as the real b overlooking Brahman, on which the eterna play of name and form goes on. The world then, is true when it is conceived of as th manifestation of Brahman. It is also true i another lower sense, viz. when name an form are inter-mixed with Him. But it i false when it is conceived in terms of nam and form only, bereft of the background o Brahman. The sole object of Māyāvāda i only to expose this common mistake that human being commits, bound by his selfishness and caught in sense enjoyment, and t divert his attention from falsehood to Trut from *māyā* to Brahman. The beautiful e pression in the *Īśa Upaniṣad* is very apt an to the point: 'This world has to be covere with the Lord.'

The sole aim of Indian philosophy, ther fore, is to provide ground and means to u derstand the Truth as it is and try to be th possessor of the joy eternal. And it is psychological truth that we will not seek f a higher joy, unless we feel dissatisfied wit our present possessions. It is this divi dissatisfaction towards things ephemeral th we have to create in ourselves to make for higher goal. There must be a disgust for th limited lower existence, a struggle, a hanke ing for the more, the higher, the better th gives real meaning to life. This positi outlook is the real message of Indian philo ophy and religion. And we have amp proof of history to show that so long understanding of philosophy and religion wa correct, the country was prosperous in respects, as also the national life was stro and vigorous.

It has to be thoroughly understood he that this attitude of Indian philosophica outlook is as objective as that of moder science. The only difference is in the ap proaches of science and philosophy. Scien keeps itself confined to matter alone, where philosophy advances further and admits th existence of Spirit as the basic Reality b hind all existence—material and spiritual. The 'world-negation' is, therefore, not a denial of matter altogether, but only not accepting it as the whole truth. If we take life only on the plane of matter, it is a 'broken arc', as Tennyson has said; it becomes a 'perfect whole' only when it is extended to the plane of Spirit. The stress of Indian philosophy is on this extended vision, which fact is oftener than not mistaken by the critics of philosophy and religion. We have to realize that the national disease is not our ascetic philosophy, but a wrong understanding of it due to our own defective and weak comprehension of it.

IV

Philosophy and religion, then, must be studied and also practised in this light to save them from wrong interpretation, not because they have degraded society, but because our earnestness for a national revival demands that the minds of common men should be re-educated about the true significance and import of religious life. The nation has to advance along its chosen path. To effect this, it is necessary to take man where he stands and thence give him a lift. India has always recognized the difference that exists between man and man, with regard to their capacities and acumen to advance in spiritual, as also in material, life. Religious beliefs must have a graded manifestation in a variegated national endeavour, because Truth has various manifestations of Itself. Lower truths, therefore, need not be rejected outright, because man, as Swami Vivekananda has said positively, 'does not travel from error to truth, but from truth to truth, from lower truth to higher truth'. We need not give undue importance to the fact that all name and form should be rejected, and at the same time, we need not accept the world unquestioningly, as some would have us to do. We must not shut our eyes to the great Truth—which definitely is the realization or manifestation of the potential divinity of our souls—and yet, we must not be too eager for a denial of this life on earth when we are really not in a position to deny it. With the realization of ultimate Truth, the world will automatically reveal its worthlessness as 'world' to us. Till then, it is self-deception to say—for instance—that a thorn does not give pain when all the while it is making our life miserable. We must be more realistic and take things as they really are to us. If there is a thorn and if we feel the prick of it, it must be plucked out; and if there is a brute, it must be faced. It is not by overlooking the lower rung that we can ascend the higher. Did not Sri Ramakrishna say that, in order to reach the terrace, the steps leading to it are the most necessary aids? To deny the existence and importance of the steps is to lose the joy of the heightening light and air of the terrace also. But, at the same time, the steps should not become the end in themselves. He who does this mistake can never get on to the terrace. And, once one reaches the terrace, he sees that the terrace is made of the same material with which the steps are made. Thus the world with its lower things, also, need not be denied, but at the same time, the higher ideal must not be lost sight of. It is only by the proper utilization of the means that the right end can be achieved. The world around us, with its duties and responsibilities, is the means which has to be rightly used to reach the ultimate Goal, and once it is reached, the difference between the divine and the non-divine vanishes, and life becomes a unified whole. This world, therefore, is not for enjoyment, but for using it as an aid to transcend it for obtaining the higher enjoyment of Spirit, without which the sorrows of life do not cease, and one does not gain That by gaining which no other gain is needed and by knowing which nothing more remains to be known. It is not, therefore, by asserting our rights and perpetrating our egoistic selfishness, but by making personal sacrifices, that we can hope to progress individually as well as collectively. These ideas of renunciation and service are the basic dmands of true religion, and it is in this positive outlook, that the correct understanding and practice of religion lies.

What is, therefore, wanted is neither the banishment of religion, nor a new philosophy of life. The only thing necessary for us today is to believe that true religion does not make us idle, inactive, or pessimistic; rather it releases a new current of energy and helps one to break the narrow walls of little self and enjoy the emancipated freedom of the higher self, which enables one to love one and all and feel the presence of universal oneness behind the fragmented lives on earth. This is possible and practical, and in it lies the golden key to the opening of a higher existence—positive, blissful, and radiant.

Fortunately for us, we have a bright example of such a divine and perfect life in Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, who are so near to us, in our own times. Though constantly merged in *samādhi*, Sri Ramakrishna could arrange the minutest details of his life better than the most methodical man; though established in the perfection of life, he could sympathize intensely with the limitations and shortcomings of ordinary human beings and could set them thinking about things eternal; though blessed with the highest transcendental vision, he could live the humble life of an unostentatious simple man in the suburbs of a city like Calcutta; and though a Hindu of the highest order, living in the orthodox atmosphere of a Kālī temple, he could fully identify himself with the followers of other faiths. He was a *yogin*, a *jñānin*, and a devotee in the best sense of the terms, nay, he was even more; yet, he was a great dynamo of action, serving the world to the last breath of his life. In him, all contradictions met and all philosophies and shades of belief found their fullest significance.

And this robust positive outlook that pervades the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna found its wonderful manifestation in the life of Swami Vivekananda. To him, life meant strength and affirmation. To him, the message of the Upaniṣads, which really is the true foundation of our religious philosophy, is that of strength: 'Therein lies strength enough to invigorate the whole world; the whole world can be vivified, made strong, energized through them. They will call with trumpet voice upon the weak, the miserable, and the downtrodden of all races, all creeds, and all sects to stand on their feet and be free; freedom, physical freedom, mental freedom, and spiritual freedom are the watchword of the Upaniṣads.' He further says: 'The best guide in life is strength. In religion, as in all other matters, discard everything that weakens you, have nothing to do with it. ... Infinite strength is religion. ... Let me tell you that we want strength, strength, and every time strength.' We once again humbly ask: Is it escapism; is it day dreaming; is it fleeing from the realities of life?

If coming events really cast their shadows, and if the positive efforts of saints are not their private affairs alone, then there is a meaning in the advent of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. With them, nothing was insignificant and no life was lost. With them, the correct emphasis was on a positive outlook and not on a negative one, in practice and not in theory, in acceptance and not in rejection of life. And this is the best that Indian culture and religion does really present. Let us now get over all hesitation, doubt, and polemics and direct our steps in keeping with this message of religion, the message of life eternal, the message of strength supreme, the message of freedom unbounded. And, in this alone, lies the cure of most of our ills—individual, social, and national.

THE BUDDHA AND THE ĀTMAN

By Pandit Jagadish Chandra Chatterji

In 1956-57, *The Middle Way* (the London Buddhist Journal) made what may be called the latest attempt at justifying an ancient 'accusation' (as the Buddha himself characterized it) brought against the Buddha by certain *samaṇas* and Brāhmaṇas of his time. The Buddha had said: 'It is dishonest, trivial, a lie, not in accordance with the real fact.' Let us quote in full the utterance concerned: 'That *bhikkhu* who has thus attained the Absolute Freedom of the heart (*ceto-vimutti*), even the *devas,* including their leaders—Inda, Brahmā, and Pajāpati—can never trace, however much they may search for him everywhere so as to be able to say: "Sheltering in here (*idaṁ-nissitam*) is the consciousness of the One So-going (Tathāgata)." And for what? Because, as I say, even in this state of earthly existence, (the ways of) the Tathāgata cannot be traced (to say nothing of their utter untraceability after his death). While I say only this, while I propound only this (only this utter untraceability of the Tathāgata-consciousness), there are certain *samaṇas* and Brāhmaṇas who accuse me—untruthfully, trivially, by telling a lie, in utter disregard of the actual fact—and say: "A Nihilist is Samaṇa Gotama; he teaches the utter cutting off, the complete loss, the total destruction of the Being that truly Is." '[1]

The Buddha's own words are these. They contain a vehement protest against the accusation that he is a Nihilist; that he teaches the utter cutting off (*uccheda*), the complete loss (*vināsa*), the total destruction (*vibhava*) of the Being that truly Is. This accusation, to repeat the Buddha's own words, is 'untrue, trivial, a lie, not according to the fact'.

This same accusation has since assumed the form that the Buddha denies the Ātman. Let us here remind ourselves of the meaning and significance of the word 'Ātman'. It is well known that the word 'Ātman' (Pali Attan) means 'Self', and that it is used in two main senses. In one sense, Ātman is the ever-changing, perishable, egoistic, personal 'self', as for instance, when any of the mutable and perishable factors, such as the body in one's personality, is regarded as the 'self'. There is no dispute as to the existence of the 'Ātman' as the perishable, egoistic, personal self. In the other sense, the word 'Ātman' is used for the immutable, imperishable, super-personal Being behind all the ever-changing and perishable factors in a personality, and as the one and only indispensable universal point of reference, as 'I', 'me', and 'mine' in every experience one has. 'Ātman', in this sense, may be translated as the 'Self'.

It is the Ātman in this universal aspect which is supposed to have been denied by the Buddha. And this, in spite of the glaring fact that the Buddha never, nowhere says 'There is no Ātman', 'This Ātman is not'. Not only has the Buddha never said any such thing, but on the contrary, he tells Ānanda, his chief disciple, that he could not possibly do this, because, to say, 'there is no Ātman' would be to preach 'Annihilationism' (the doctrine of Ucchedavāda), which he altogether repudiates.

Since most people who have any knowledge of this conversation of the Buddha with Ānanda have it in a confused manner, this story, in its true and original form, may be given here, specially because this story alone is a sufficient refutation of the falsehood, indeed, the lie, that the Buddha denies the Ātman. It is as follows.

On one occasion, a certain wandering ascetic, Vacchagotta by name, comes to the

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[1] *Alagaddūpama-sutta*, *Majjhima-Nikāya*, I, p. 140, P.T.S. edition.

Buddha and puts to him the direct question: 'Is there the Ātman? Does the Ātman exist?' The Buddha makes no answer; he remains altogether silent. Vacchagotta, however, does not stop at this, but puts him the negative question: 'Is there, then, no Ātman?' The Buddha does not answer this question either. So Vacchagotta goes away much puzzled.

After his departure, Ānanda wants to know from the Buddha his reason for not answering either of the two questions of Vacchagotta. And the Buddha tells Ānanda the reason. Being the perfect master of *jhāna-samādhi,* the Buddha possesses all those psycho-spiritual powers which come to one on attaining the fourth *jhāna* stage and thereafter. One of these is the power to know at a glance a person, even though altogether a stranger, 'inside-out', to know all his thoughts and feelings, all his attitudes. He, therefore, sees at once how Vacchagotta would not be able to understand the answers to his two questions aright: that he would certainly misunderstand them. The Buddha knows, too, in what way exactly they would be misunderstood.

So, the Buddha says to Ānanda: 'If, Ānanda, I had said "yes" to Vacchagotta's first question, he would, certainly, have thought that I was siding with the Sassatavāda, the Eternalist. And if, Ānanda, in answer to his second question, I said "No, there is no Ātman", he would, certainly, have thought that I was siding with the Ucchedavāda, the universal Annihilationist.'[2] In these circumstances, the best thing the Buddha could do was to remain silent. This, then, is the reason of the Buddha for not answering Vacchagotta's questions. It is not that he did not know the answers or any such thing.

In regard to the two doctrines—Eternalism and Annihilationism—the second one is the doctrine which teaches the 'utter cutting off', 'the complete loss', and the 'total destruction' of the Being that truly Is.

From the quotation given above from the *Alagaddūpama-sutta,* we can see that 'the Being that truly Is' means nothing else than the Infinite Knowingness, that is, Tathāgata-viññāṇa, which has no perceptible sign whatever, whereby it could be pointed out as 'here' and 'there' (*anidassana*), is Infinite (*ananta*), and which has wholly cast off every objective relation (*sabbato'paha*). This Tathāgata-viññāṇa is only another name for Nibbāna (*Vide Alagaddūpama-sutta* quoted above and *Papañcasūdanī* on *Brahmanimantanika-sutta*).

Further, this Tathāgata-viññāṇa or Infinite Knowingness is, as can be seen, the same as the Upaniṣadic Ātman which is 'Knowingness Itself in all its glory' or Brahman described as 'Knowingness Infinite'. That is to say, Ucchedavāda is the doctrine of the Ātman's annihilation—the Ātman which is declared by the Upaniṣad as utterly indestructible, *avināśin* and *anucchitti-dharmā* (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad,* IV.5.14), which, by its very nature, is free from all cutting off (*ucchitti*), which is only a different form of the same word as '*uccheda*'.

While this is Ucchedavāda, Eternalism (Sassatavāda), as defined by the Buddha himself, is the doctrine which holds (i) that every individual self (Ātman) is eternal as individual and personal, and (ii) that the universe which exists in relation thereto is also eternal. Both these doctrines are rejected by the Buddha as well as the Upaniṣadic seer.

This is what the Buddha meant when he told Ānanda that, in one case, the true answer would make Vacchagotta imagine that the Buddha was supporting Eternalism (Sassatavāda), and in the other case, it would make him think that the Buddha was supporting Annihilationism (Ucchedavāda).

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[2] In Pali, the expression 'Ucchedavāda' means one who holds the doctrine of Uccheda or 'annihilation'. Similarly, the word 'Sassatavāda' means the person who holds the opposite doctrine. But, in Sanskrit, the words refer to the respective doctrines themselves, and not the persons who hold them. For the sake of convenience, we shall henceforth use the expression in their Sanskrit sense.

The most important points to note in all this are just two, namely, (a) that the denial of the Ātman is placed by the Buddha in the category of Annihilationism, (b) that the ascription to the Buddha of Annihilationism, and therefore, the denial of the Ātman, too, which is the very core of Ucchedavāda, is strongly repudiated by the Buddha by saying that this ascription to him is made untruthfully, trivially, by telling a lie, and by not stating the actual fact.

This is quite equivalent—indeed, more than equivalent—to a formal statement that 'The Ātman most certainly Is'. But the Buddha does not make such a statement, because it cannot be made with strict logical consistency of Ātman which is beyond all thought and speech—'from which words, together with the mind, fall back and away, not reaching it'—so that the Upaniṣad of the Veda, centuries before Gotama the Buddha, has to own and say that 'the Ātman is "not" and "not"'. That is to say that the Ātman cannot be defined in any positive terms with rational consistency. 'Is' has no meaning without reference to space ('here' and 'there') and time ('now' and 'then'), but Ātman transcends both. Even then, the seers and sages have often been tempted to describe the Indescribable in positive terms.

So far, we have dealt with the negative aspect of the question namely the repudiation of the accusation brought against the Buddha, saying that he denies the Ātman—Ātman in the sense of One, Eternal, Immutable Being. Before proceeding further, we may consider one secondary point of a historical nature. It has been stated that, 'If the Buddha, contrary to the whole of Buddhist tradition, had proclaimed a transcendental Ātman, one would expect that some one of the many Buddhist sects would have preserved a trace of it' (*Vide* 'Vedānta and Buddhism' in the *Middle Way*).

To this, it may be replied that not only 'traces', but adequate mention of the original teaching of the Buddha regarding the existence of the Ātman are undoubtedly there in the Pali texts, as we shall see, but they have been either neglected or misrepresented and even distorted in later times by the Annihilationist followers of the Buddha. Even in the Buddha's own time, as he himself tells us, there were certain *samaṇas* and Brāhmaṇas who misunderstood and misinterpreted his teachings, and it is people of their line of thinking who ultimately predominated. The original followers of the Buddha's true teaching, namely the Sākiyaputtiyas, were gradually absorbed and lost in the Vedic school with which the Buddha's real teachings had little or no conflict. As regards the *bhikkhus* of the Buddha's own Order, who could have preserved the 'traces' of his teachings, they were mostly wiped out of existence, as later history would confirm. The extant Buddhist sects grew out of the distortions and misrepresentations wrought by the unorthodox classes. In this way, the tradition of the Buddha's real teaching was lost among his professed followers. History can furnish evidences of similar distortion of a Master's real voice in other lands.

We may now take up the other aspect of the topic: the Buddha's positive references to the Ātman. His first and earliest reference occurs in what came to be known in later times as the 'Discourse on the Characteristics of the Not-Ātman, Not-Self' (*Anatta-lakkhaṇa-sutta*). Therein, he mentions the Ātman, along with five other factors. The latter comprise all that is mutable and perishable in man's personality as well as in his universe.

In what is clearly a very ancient Pali verse recited by the Buddha, the names of these factors occur in the following form and order: *rūpa, vedayita, saññaṁ, viññāṇa*, and *saṁkhata*.[3] The original names of the five factors are highly technical; they are scientific and philosophic terms with defined meanings. Hence it is impossible to translate them adequately and accurately by single-word equivalents; they can only be explained, but not translated. We will, therefore, use the original terms. These five orders of the mutable and perishable in man and universe are given the general name *'skandha'* in Sanskrit, and *'khandha'* in Pali. They are the well-known 'five *khandhas*'.

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[3] *Māra-Saṁyutta, Patta-suttaṁ, Saṁyuṭta-Nikāya.* The verse later mentions their forms, and the order of counting them are slightly altered; the names *vedayita,*

In this context, *'skandha'* means a ledge on which one's personal consciousness rests or 'is established' (*patitthita,* Sanskrit *'pratiṣṭhita'*; *'nissita'*, Sanskrit *'nisṛita'*, not *'niḥsṛita'*), the consciousness which is limited and hence can be traced and pointed out as 'this-inherent' (*idamnissita*), inherent in this or that. But the supra-consciousness of a Tathāgata who is absolutely free not only in the reasoning mind, but also in the believing heart (both *paññāvimutta* and *cetovimutta*), is wholly independent of every support (*appatiṭṭhita-viññaṇa*), ever steady, unlimited, and utterly incapable of being traced (*ananuvejja*) and of being pointed out as dependent on this or that (See *Alagaddūpama-sutta,* quoted above.).[4]

In these circumstances, the best way t translate *'khandha'* in this context should b 'ledge', 'support', on which the limited pe sonal consciousness rests.

As the Buddha tells us, each of the fi *khandhas* exists in two main orders—perso and external, cosmical (*ajjhatta* and *bahidd* —*adhyātma* and *bahirdhā* in Sanskrit). T 'personal' *khandha* (also called *upādā khandha*) is that which builds one's person ity through attachment, while the 'cosmic is the world outside one's personality, su as the world of body, the world of life, t world of mind, etc. These are all mutab and perishable.

As is well known to the students of t subject, these names of the five *khandhas* a well as the name Ātman, along with whi they are mentioned in the *Anattalakkha sutta,* and also, several scientific and phi sophical names are introduced in the talks b the Buddha quite abruptly without any e planation or definition. This is because the terms were all well known to, and were t common property of, the *paṇḍitas* of t Buddha's age in India.

In regard to the five names of the five ord of the mutable in man and the universe, w have the Buddha's own words, stating h they are well known to the learned schol of his days. It may be well—indeed, it i necessary—to give here a summarized versi of this utterance. Addressing the monks, h says: 'I do not quarrel with the world. I regard to the *khandhas,* I do not go agai the *paṇḍitas.* On the contrary, I agree wi them in their views of both what is untru as well as the truth about the *khandhas.* Th

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saññam, and *saṁkhata* become *vedanā, sañña,* and *saṁkhāra, rūpa* and *viññāṇa* remaining unchanged, while in regard to their order, the fourth and fifth change places, i.e. *viññāṇa* is counted fifth and *saṁkhata* fourth. It can be shown that the order of counting them as stated earlier is not only older, but also natural, because in the process of their appearance (*paṭicca-samutpāda*), the *saṁkhata* comes into manifestation first, and then *viññāṇa.*

[4] There is much confusion about the word *'nissita'* in the phrase *'idaṁ-nissitam'*, occurring in the *Alagaddūpama-sutta.* It is taken to be the equivalent of the Sanskrit word *'niḥsṛitam'*, meaning 'that has thrown out' and cast off the five *khandhas.* But, really, it is the Pali form of Sanskrit *'nisṛtaṁ'*, meaning 'that is propped on, ledged on'. The word *'idam'* in the expression *'idaṁ-nissitam Tathāgata-viññāṇam'* is thought to be adjectively used of the word *'viññāṇa'*, and the expression is interpreted as 'this Tathāgata-Concsiousness has gone out of, is freed from', the *khandhas.* But, really, *'idam'* is only a part of the compound word *'idaṁ-nissitam'* which is an adjective to *'viññāṇam'*, so that the whole expression means 'the Tathāgata-Consciousness is propped on, dependent on this or that'. That is to say, it cannot be pointed out as dependent on this or that object.

This meaning is clear from the expression 'ett *nissitam'*—here-inherent—which is used of the ego personal self, in the description of what is called by t *ñāṇadassana* which is attained after the fourth *jhāna* is reached. In that stage, this personal self c be clearly seen to be inherent here, in this body (ett *paṭibaddham*), in the same way as the coloured th passing through beads of crystals can be perceived.

It should be noted, too. that the Ceylonese reading *'nissita'* here is *'sita'*, which can, by no means, con the meaning 'thrown out', 'freed from'.

paṇḍitas hold it to be untruth that either *rūpa* or *vedayita* or *sañña* or *saṁkhāra* is eternal, ever immovably fixed, everlasting, never-changing by nature. And I agree with them; I say the same. Again, they hold it to be the truth that *rūpa* and *vedayita* and *sañña* and *viññāṇa* and *saṁkhāra*, that every one of these is non-eternal, full of evil, and full of misery, ever-changing by nature. Here, too, I agree with them; I say the same' (*Saṁyutta-Nikāya, Khandha-saṁyutta*, Vol. III, p. 138, P.T.S. edition).

From this, we can see that, according to the Buddha himself, the five *khandhas* were known to the *paṇḍitas* of the day, not by name alone, but also as they are by their essential nature as ever-changing, perishable affairs.

The only difference is that while, in those days, the *paṇḍitas*—or rather most of them, like most scholars of today—had only heresay, second-hand knowledge of the *khandhas*, the Buddha had not just learnt them in a hearsay manner from his teachers. He, on the other hand, personally verified them by *jhāna-samādhi*, in the same way that, as he himself tells us, he first got a hearsay knowledge of the last two *arūpa-jhāna* states, respectively, from Aḷārakālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta, who had the direct, immediate knowledge of what they taught, and then verified them for himself. In regard to the five *khandhas*, he says, in the same utterance summarized above, that he preaches the truth of the five *khandhas* only after verifying them by the method of full spiritual awakening, (*abhi-saṁbujjhitvā*) and of the most perfect integration of consciousness (*abhisametvā*).

Further, the five *khandhas* were known among the scholars of not only the Buddha's days, but also of the pre-Buddha Upaniṣadic times, equally as they have been known by the post-Buddha Vedāntic writers. Both the pre-Buddha Upaniṣads as well as the relevant post-Buddha Vedāntic writers, however, call them by means other than those used by the Buddha. These names are *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijñānamaya*, and *ānandamaya*. In the Upaniṣads, they are called the Ātman in the egoistic, limited sense, while in the Vedāntic literature, the name given to each is *kośa* (coating) of the Ātman, the Self.

We shall now turn to some of the specific references made by the Buddha to the Ātman, the Self. The first and the earliest mention of the Ātman, the Self, by the Buddha, is in his discourse on the 'Characteristics of the non-Ātman', as has already been noted. This discourse begins abruptly with the Buddha declaring, 'The body is not-Ātman'; and then he says: 'If the body were the Ātman, then the body would not be getting involved in opposition to, in conflict with (*ā-bādha*) one's will, and one would gain the power of ordering (*labbhetha*) in regard to the body (*rūpa*): "Let my body be such and such; let my body be not such and such." Because it is not-the-Ātman, therefore, *rūpa* gets involved in opposition to, in conflict with one's self-will, and one has not the power to say: "Let my *rūpa* be such and such; let my *rūpa* be not such and such."'

From the second sentence of this utterance, we can gather, and gather quite legitimately, that, according to the Buddha, Ātman, the Self, is something which does not get involved in opposition to, in conflict with one's will. But this is only a negative way of saying that the Ātman is always under the complete control of one's will (*vasa*), as mentioned in the Buddha's conversation with Saccaka (*Cūḷa-saccaka-sutta, Majjhima-Nikāya*, I, p.231, P.T.S. edition).

We should note here carefully that this discourse on the characteristic of the not-Self has been terribly distorted by later Buddhists, with a view to making it the basis of their dogma that everything in the universe is Ātman-less, devoid of Ātman. They have done this by first taking the Pali expression '*anattan*' (Sanskrit '*anātman*') as an adjective, and then, interpreting it as 'without Ātman', 'devoid of Ātman'. But even a tyro in Pali can see that the word is a masculine noun meaning 'not-the-Ātman', that is to say, what is the reverse of the Ātman itself. This is quite clear from the expression, 'if the body were the Ātman' (*rūpam ca idaṁ attā abhavissa*), used in the second sentence of the discourse. Here *rūpa* is in apposition with *attā*.

It is most important to note this terrible distortion. No one with the slightest acquaintance with the Pali language could take the word '*anattaṁ*', in this context, as an adjective, and meaning 'without the *attan*' or 'Ātman-less', especially because of the phrase like 'If the body were the Ātman'. It should be noted, too, that this distortion fits in well with the Nihilistic dogma that 'there is no Ātman'.

Leaving this distortion aside, there is in the whole range of the Buddha's utterances, nothing whatsoever which could show that the Buddha, ever, anywhere taught that there is no Ātman. The purpose of the above-quoted discourse is to show that none of the five *khandhas* is the Ātman. As we know from the Buddha's own words translated above, the doctrine of the *khandhas* being not the Ātman is not anything new, but that this was current among the contemporary scholars and their predecessors. Thus none of the five *khandhas* being the Ātman, the Ātman must be something other than the *khandhas*. The *khandhas* are the not-Ātman, because they are non-eternal, full of misery, perishable by nature. The Buddha repeatedly declares: 'Whatever is impermanent and perishable is miserable, evil; whatever is miserable, evil is Anātman, not-the-Ātman' (*Saṁyutta-Nikāya*, III, pp. 44-45, P.T.S. edition).

But by the very definition of *anātman*, the Buddha tells us, also, what the Ātman really is, namely, whatever is permanent and imperishable, joyful and good is the Ātman. Of all things in the universe, Nibbāna (Nirvāṇa) alone is absolutely permanent, imperishable. Hence Nibbāna alone is supreme joy (*paramasukham*), is goodness Absolute. Thus Nibbāna alone is the Ātman, or the Ātman is only Nibbāna under a different name.

The Buddha speaks of Nibbāna as 't Being, the Absolutely fixed and firm and tr the Deathless, the Peace, the Good, t Secure' (*sacca, dhuva, amata, sānta, si khema—Saṁyutta-Nikāya*, IV, pp. 363- P.T.S. edition). All these are epith applied to Ātman, to Brahman in Ve Upaniṣads and allied literature.

Despite these most positive and unamb uous words of the Buddha concerning Ni bāna, certain scholars have tried to establ that Nibbāna is not the Self, *anattā*. B they forget that they, thereby, nullify t fundamental teaching of the Buddha. Nibbāna were *anattā*, not-the-Self, as t scholars contend, then, Nibbāna must perishable and miserable, *anicca* and *dukkh* the *anattā* being defined by the Buddha in t famous formula quoted above as 'whatever impermanent, perishable is misery, and wh ever is misery is *anattā*'. But not even o with the slightest acquaintance with t Buddha's philosophy would concede th Nibbāna is impermanent and misery.

We may now consider some of the autho ties quoted by these scholars in support their contention that Nibbāna is *ana* Firstly, they say that Nibbāna is described *anattā* in the following verse of the *Vina Piṭaka*, V, p. 86 (Oldenberg's edition):

> *Aniccā sabbe saṁkhārā dukkhā anattā*
> *ca saṅkha*
> *Nibbānañ c'eva paññatti anattā iti*
> *nicche*

It is difficult to see how this verse can be terpreted to convey the meaning that N bāna is *anattā*, not-the-Self. It simply me that Nibbāna as idea is not-Self.

Another authority quoted is the *Ud* VIII.2, where Nibbāna is said to be descri as *anattā*. But this is clearly a misread The correct reading, as given in several ma scripts, is '*ananta*' meaning infinite, an adj tive which is used of Nirvāṇa or Tathāg Consciousness in the verse-line: '*Viññā anidassanaṁ anantaṁ sabbato'pahaṁ*' (

Dīgha-Nikāya, *Kevaḍḍha-sutta* and *Majjhima-Nikāya*, *Brahmanimantanika-sutta*, with the *Papañcasūdanī* on the latter).

Anyway, as we repeat, to speak of Nibbāna as *'anattā'*—devoid of Self in the sense of the Ultimate Reality—amounts to declaring Nibbāna as both perishable and miserable. This is against the whole conception of Nibbāna.

Next, we may take up the famous utterance of the Buddha, directing his disciples to make the Ātman, the Self, the 'Island', the 'Refuge', which, as he tells us in another utterance (*Dhammapada*, 25), will not be overwhelmed by the flood of *saṁsāra*, of repeated births and deaths, hence of sorrows and sufferings.

He also tells the disciples that they must not make such an island, such a refuge of anything else, for there is nothing else than the Ātman that will not be overwhelmed by that terrible flood.

It has been contended that, in this direction, 'Ātman' is only the limited, personal ego, and is not used in the sense of the ultimate Being. But this limited, personal self or ego is perishable, and therefore, subject to the flood of *saṁsāra* or 'becoming', and there would be no sense in directing one to make it the sole refuge, the securest island, which has to be attained only by unrelenting spiritual discipline, by ever being up and doing, never-slackening zeal and enthusiasm, unrelaxing self-control, and lofty spritual self-taming (*uṭṭhānena appamādena saṁyamena damena*).

Then, there is a parallel direction given by the Buddha to his disciples. It is to make Dhamma the Island and the Refuge that will not be overwhelmed. And, as in the other direction, the Buddha takes good care to tell the disciples that they must not make anything else such an island or refuge.

The two directions, taken together, will show that it is one and the same thing, one and the same ultimate Reality, which the Buddha means by Ātman in one direction, and by Dhamma in the other. To tell people to make the Ātman and nothing else the Island and Refuge, and to tell them again in the same breath, as it were, to make Dhamma and nothing else the Island and Refuge, one can construe no other meaning, except that Ātman and Dhamma are but alternative names of one and the same thing. It is like telling a person to take shelter in Jesus, and not in anyone else, and then again, telling him in the same breath, as it were, to take shelter in Christ and not in anyone else. This can be done logically, only if Jesus and Christ are but the two different names of one and the same person.

It is necessary to mention here that the word *'dhamma'*, like the word 'self' is used in two different senses, its root meaning being 'things which are held together' or 'that which holds things together ', in which sense, it is usually in the plural, while in the second sense, it means the ultimate Reality, 'the Absolute Law and Justice' that holds together and governs the compound things and beings of the universe. These two different senses of the word find expression in the following *gāthā* (song-verse) which the Buddha uttered immediately as he woke up to the sense-perceptible world, on attaining *bodhi*:

'Yadā have pātu bhavanti dhammā
ātapino jhāyato Brāhmaṇassa;
Atha'ssa kaṅkhā vapayanti sabbā
yato pajānāti sa-Hetu Dhammam.'

Here the word *'dhamma'* in the first line, unquestionably, means 'the laws and processes by which all compounded things in the universe are severally held together', while 'Dhamma' in the second line can only mean the ultimate Reality, Nirvāṇa, which holds the universe as a unified whole.

In our present context, Dhamma means not just a collection of philosophical and ethical utterances; it can have no other sense than that of the ultimate Reality. It is that Dhamma which monk Channa, despite his knowledge of all authentic utterances on Dhamma, and all his efforts to 'see' Dhamma, had not been able to see. It is, again, that Dhamma which, being seen, the Buddha himself is seen as he really is (*'Yo dhammaṁ passati, so māṁ passati; yo māṁ passati so dhammaṁ passati'*, *Samyutta-Nikāya*, III, p. 130, P.T.S. edition). That is to say, Dhamma in the highest philosophical sense and the Buddha as truly is, are one.

This, also, means that the Buddha as Dhamma is very different from the Buddha as a person in a physical body which is subject to decay, as characterized by the Buddha as a 'rotten body' (*pūtikāya*) in the reference just quoted. In other words, Dhamma, in this context, is only Tathāgata-Consciousness or which is the same thing as Nibbāna. Hence, too, Dhamma, in the sense it is identical with the Buddha in his freest state, with Tathāgata-Consciousness, and with Nibbāna, is identical with Ātman in the highest Vedic sense.

SRI AUROBINDO AND ŚANKARA ON THE ABSOLUTE

By Sri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer

The philosophy of Śaṅkara, which maintains the sole reality of Brahman in strict conformity to the Upaniṣadic formula 'one without a second' (*ekameva advitīyam*) and which, consequently, reduces the world and finite spirits to appearances arising from a foundational error, has naturally evoked much adverse criticism in later times. It is well known that Rāmānuja, the illustrious founder of Viśiṣṭādvaita, has formulated several objections against Śaṅkara's doctrine of Nirguṇa Brahman. Vedānta Deśika, who came after Rāmānuja and who put Viśiṣṭādvaita on a systematic and stable footing, has written a book called *Śata-Dūṣaṇī*, in which he has advanced several criticisms against Śaṅkara's Advaita in general, and his doctrine of Māyā, in particular. It is also well known that Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, in his *Advaita-Siddhi*, has given most cogent and convincing answers to these objections, as also to others advanced by the Dvaitins. Brahmānanda, in his *Laghu-Candrikā*, which is a commentary on *Advaita-Siddhi*, has met the other charges that were made up to his time.

In spite of these answers, criticism keeps cropping up from time to time, because it is so difficult for thinkers to reconcile themselves to the uncompromising monism of Śaṅkara which robs the *jīvas* of their individuality and reduces the world, which is the scene of all our endeavours, to a mere illusory appearance on a par with dream perceptions. One of the recent critics of Śaṅkara's Advaita is Aurobindo Ghose, the great *yogin* of Pondicherry. His book, *Life Divine*, is a brilliant contribution to Indian philosophical speculation. Though, on account of a certain mystical vein pervading the entire work, it is a hard nut to crack for ordinary readers, still it amply repays a careful and systematic study. When one dives deep into the work one gets the feeling that he is in touch with a mind of a very fine penetration and that he is moving all the time in a high and rarefied atmosphere. Aurobindo's general philosophical standpoint bears a close resemblance to that of F. H. Bradley. Śaṅkara's conception of Brahman as Pure Spirit, devoid of all differences, *sajātīya*, *vijātīya*, and *svagata* that it is therefore sentience all compact (Prajñānaghana) and, finally, that it excludes everything that is non-sentient has proved to be rather puzzling for Aurobindo who describes it as 'a void of nothingness' and 'Eternal Silence'. As against the Nirguṇa Brahman of Śaṅkara, Aurobindo has developed at great length his own theory of the 'Integral Absolute'. In the course of his work, he refers to Śaṅkara by name but once, though he makes frequent references to his philosophy, which he chooses to describe as 'Illusionism' or 'ascetic philosophy'. Both appelations are misleading, as will become clear later. It is unfortunate that such wrong nomenclatures, which have the effect of creating in advance a certain prejudice in the minds of unwary readers, should be given. Before examining Aurobindo's theory of the 'Integral Absolute', it may be useful to set forth this conception as far as possible in his own language.

The highest reality, according to Aurobindo, is above all finite determinations. It is beyond time, space, causal relation, and other categories of the understanding. Since it is beyond all relations, it is inconceivable by mind and thought. But it is not a mere blank. It is the substratum which remains when all names and forms are denied. It is the permanent and stable basis underlying the changing world. 'Behind the world-movement, there must be something stable. This entity is the timeless, spaceless, infinite, and indefinable Existence. It is not an aggregate of forms or a formal substratum of of forms. If all forms, quantities, and qualities were to disappear, this would still remain. Existence without quantity, without quality, without form is not only conceivable, but it is the one thing we can conceive behind these phenomena.' The analysis of the external world leads us ultimately to the conception of the acosmic Brahman, as that which sustains the movements of the changing order of things.

A similar analysis of the internal states of man will confirm the same conclusion. 'There is a supreme experience and supreme intuition by which we go back behind our surface self and find that becoming, change, and succession are only a mode of our being and that there is that in us which is not involved at all in the becoming. It is pure existence, eternal, infinite, indefinable, not affected by the succession of time, not involved in the extension of space, beyond form, quantity, quality, Self only, and Absolute.' This may be termed Ātman.

Though Brahman or Ātman is the highest reality, it is by no means the sole or only reality. The changing flux of the world is, also, a part of our experience, and it is impossible to dismiss it or think it away. The supreme experience of Brahman or Ātman does not have the effect of abolishing or contradicting the lower experience. If Being is a fact, Becoming is also a fact. We have to reckon with it and make terms with it. Matter and its mutations are hard facts given in experience and there is no justification for treating them as an illusory appearance. 'The truths of material science and their real utilities must be preserved in the final harmony. We must seek a large and complete affirmation. We perceive that in the Indian ascetic ideal, the great Vedāntic formula "one without a second" has not been read sufficiently in the light of the other formula, equally imperative, "all this is Brahman".' Aurobindo's point is that the statement, 'all this is Brahman' (*sarvaṁ khalu idaṁ Brahma*), occurring in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (III. 14.1), is as important and significant as the other statement, 'one without a second' (*ekam eva advitīyam*), occurring in the same Upaniṣad (VI.2.1), and that it is clearly one-sided exaggeration to lay the entire stress on the latter and quietly ignore the former.

Spirit and matter are, therefore, of the same unknowable reality. The apparent difference between them must not lead us to think that the one excludes the other. 'The apparent incompatibility of the two is an error of the limited mind which, accustomed to the trenchant oppositions of affirmation and denial, is unable to conceive of a comprehensive consciousness, vast enough to include both in a simultaneous embrace.' 'The real Monism the true Advaita, is that which admits all things as the One Brahman, and does not seek to bisect its existence into two incompatible entities, an eternal truth and an eternal falsehood, Brahman and not-Brahman, Self and not-Self.' Aurobindo has, therefore, no hesitation to put aside the 'trenchant destructions of a partial logic which declares that, because the One is the reality, the Many are an illusion, and because the Absolute is *sat*, the relative is *asat*.' 'It is only when we put aside all irreconcilable antinomy between Self and not-Self that things fall into their place by a less paradoxical logic.'

Aurobindo's charge against Śaṅkara is that he has made too much of the difference that we ordinarily perceive between Spirit and matter. In his opinion, the difference is more apparent than real. They do not fall apart, but run into each other. Matter houses Spirit and Spirit ensouls matter. 'Matter is a fit and noble material out of which He (the Infinite) weaves constantly His garbs, builds recurrently the unending series of His mansions.' Close reflection will show that there is no break between either matter and life, or life and mind, or mind and consciousness. In each case, the latter grows out of the former, because it is already implicit there. It is only a case of manifesting the potentiality already contained in matter, life, and mind. There is thus no break anywhere. Matter is a form of veiled life, and life a form of veiled consciousness. In that case, the unconquerable impulse of man towards God, Light, Bliss, Freedom, and Immortality presents itself in the right place in the chain as simply the imperative impulse by which nature is seeking to evolve beyond mind.'

Strictly speaking, therefore, there is no antithesis between Spirit and matter. There is no reason to dichotomize reality into Self and not-Self and to make out that the two are as opposed as light and darkness, and that is sheer folly to identify the two or transfer the attributes of the one to the other. In his celebrated introduction to the *Brahma-Sūtra-bhāṣya*, known as *'adhyāsa-prakaraṇa'*, Śaṅkara, as is well known, has drawn such a distinction between Spirit and matter and has illustrated it by referring to the first personal and second personal pronouns, *'asmat'* and *'yuṣmat'*, which can never be brought into grammatical relationship in the same sentence. He further says that the common practice of identifying the Self with the physical body, the sense organs, the mind, and the internal organ is due to a natural error which is beginningless. We commit the same mistake if we identify Brahman with matter and its evolutes. These are all clear instances of superimposition (*adhyāsa*). The states of the mind, what are known as *'vṛttis'*, are also superimpositions on consciousness, which is only the standing witness (*sākṣin*) of the passing states.

Aurobindo thinks that Śaṅkara has overdrawn the distinction, being misled by a partial logic. In his opinion, the Law of Contradiction, which breaks up Reality into two mutually exclusive units, has played havoc with Śaṅkara's philosophy. He has been betrayed by placing too much faith in it. 'A law founded upon an observation of what is divisible in space and time cannot be confidently applied to the being and the action of the Indivisible. Not only can it not be applied to the spaceless and timeless Infinite, but it cannot be applied even to the time-infinite or space-infinite. A law and process binding on our superficial being need not be binding on what is occult within us. The contrary relation which admits of a middle ground, and therefore, makes for continuity and reconciliation can be applied with greater justification to ultimate realities.

We see all around us identity running through difference, unity in diversity, permanence in the midst of change. The One and the Many are not opposed entities. They can subsist peacefully side by side. The latter grows out of the former by slow and imperceptible stages. It is an inner necessity which provides the urge for the One to manifest itself as the many.

Formlessness and form are not, again, related as contradictories. What we mean by formlessness is that the Infinite is not tied down to any one particular form, but that it has the freedom to assume any form. The forms that it can assume is past counting. 'The Infinite is at once Form and the Formless. The apparent contradiction does not correspond to a real opposition. The Formless is not a negation of the power of formation, but the condition for the Infinite's free formation. The Divine is formless and nameless, but by that very reason, capable of manufacturing all possible names and shapes of being. Form may be said to be the inevitable self-revelation of the Formless. The Infinite is nameless, but in that namelessness it includes all possible names.' When we say that the Infinite is without name and forms, what we mean is that it *exceeds* them, that it is something which refuses to be bound by our limited understanding.

Reconciliation of seeming opposites is, then, the true function of philosophy. Such a procedure alone will lead to Truth. 'Śaṅkara's wordless, inactive Self and his Māyā of many names and forms are disparate and irreconcilable terms. Their rigid antagonism can terminate only by the dissolution of the multitudinous illusion into the sole truth of the Eternal Silence. In this barren contradiction, the human mind cannot rest satisfied.' It is always in search of the highest unity which will comprehend all apparent differences. In our eagerness to attain the ultimate unity, we must not deny or exclude the multiplicity.

So far we have given a fairly full account of Aurobindo's conception of the Integral Absolute, and we are now free to examine it in some detail. He admits that the main problem of philosophy is how to reduce the multiplicity that is given in perception to unity. The human mind cannot reconcile itself to a chaotic multiplicity. It is always in search of the central unity which is behind and beyond the diversity. Aurobindo thinks that the unity for which the human mind is putting up a persistent quest has to be reached by harmonizing and reconciling the apparent contradictions that are to be found in the world. Spirit and matter appear to be polar opposites, but in reality, they are not so diverse as we think. Spirit cannot manifest itself, except through material aids.

It is true that Spirit and matter are found in close association. It is also true that, in ordinary experience, we never come across pure matter or pure form. We may even agree with Aristotle that formless matter and immaterial form are both ideal abstractions. But all this does not by any means lessen the opposition between them or establish any common ground between them. Reflection will show that Spirit and matter are really poles asunder. Spirit is a sentient entity, whereas matter is insentient; Spirit not only exists, but also knows that it exists, whereas matter has only existence. It does not know itself, but requires to be revealed by Spirit. Matter is, therefore, an object (*dṛśya*) in relation to a subject (*dṛk*), while Spirit is never an object and does not require to be revealed by any other agency. It always stands self-revealed. It is self-luminous and shines in its own light. When objects are presented to it in the waking and dream states, it lights them up and when nothing is presented to it, as in the state of profound sleep, the light of the Spirit does not go out, but continues to shine as before, only to declare that nothing is presented to it. When we transcend even the state of dreamless sleep and attain the fourth one known as *turīya*, we enter what is called '*samādhi*' and attain the plenary experience of non-dual Absolute which is literally 'one without a second.[1] The knowing subject then vanishes as such, because it has been transformed into the Highest by the advent of right knowledge regarding the nature of the *jīva*. The experience of that state is not consciousness of the Absolute (*akhaṇḍākāra-vṛtti*), but Absolute Consciousness (*akhaṇḍa-caitanya*). This is the Ātman which never suffers contradiction, for we can never imagine the absence of consciousness. 'The Knower's function of knowing can never be lost, because it is immortal', says the Upaniṣad.[2] The *vṛttis* or states of the mind may come and go, but Consciousness which lights them up remains for ever as the constant witness of them all. It is the only permanent and stable reality behind the passing shows of the world.

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[1] 'That which is one (without a second), which is the fourth state (i.e. superconscious state)) beyond all the three ordinary states of consciousness, and which shines in the heart of those in *samādhi* when all that is in the world has been denied (as not being Brahman) by the words of the Śruti, "not this, not this"—that Supreme Brahman am I' (*Svarūpānusandhānāṣṭakam*, 5).

It can never be doubted or denied. It is quite possible to doubt the existence of objects which are external to us, but such a doubt can never arise with regard to the inmost Self of man. When all else has been doubted or denied, the doubter and denier will still remain. Any attempt to doubt or deny the Self will only serve to establish it on a firmer and more secure footing than ever before. Hence it is the one reality which will never suffer contradiction by any other experience. Since it continues to shine even when no object is presented to it, it is not dependent on anything else. It rests on its own glory, *sve mahimni*, as the Upaniṣad puts it.[3] It does not require any material aid for its manifestation.[4] The process of evolution should be viewed, not as providing increasing faculties for Spirit to manifest itself through more and more refined forms of matter, but as the process by which Spirit gradually discards the material appurtenances with which it is associated from time immemorial. It is a case of Spirit disengaging itself from every kind of adventitious adjunct. In the state of *samādhi*, Spirit comes to its own and shines in its native splendour. It is pure and homogeneous, since it is nothing but consciousness through and through. Here we have the true and unalloyed unity o which we have been in search. The Ātman i strictly one without a second. It excludes al differences, internal and external. Śaṅkara founds his Advaita on the unity of th Ātman, and hence it is known as Ātmādvaita as distinct from Brahmādvaita.

The unity of the Self is reached by eliminating all that is adventitious to it. It has bee stated above that man passes through thre states, the waking (*jāgrat*), the drea (*svapna*), and the dreamless sleep (*suṣupti*) The analysis of these states shows how every thing that is in the nature of adjunct is bein gradually eliminated, leaving ultimately th standing witness-consciousness (*sākṣi-ca tanya*) shining in its native splendour. In th Upaniṣads, this process of elimination is s forth very clearly.[5] Things that fall awa without doing the least violence to that t which they appeared to belong must b deemed to be casual adjuncts. There can b no vital or organic relation between such ad juncts and the Self to which they appear t belong. The Self, therefore, is a thing apar standing in no relation to anything withi or without. It is unattached (*asaṁsṛṣṭa*).

The *vṛttis*, therefore, are superposed on i in the same way in which the world of divers ity is super-imposed on Brahman. Both ar clear cases of *adhyāsa*. Brahman does no contain the world, and it is mere gratuito assumption to suppose that what is unma fest and potential at one stage becomes ma fest and actual at another. Brahman, whi is the same as Ātman, is a pure, unmixe homogeneous unity. 'As a lump of s dropped into water dissolves into water, a no one is able to pick it up, but whensoev one takes it, it tastes salt, even so, my de this great, endless, Infinite Reality is but P Intelligence', says Yājñavalkya, addressi his wife.[6] The Infinite Self is '*vijñānaghana*'. The Self, so conceived, can never enter into relation with the not-Self. The problem of integrating it with matter will present itself only to the neutral observer who has not realized the identity of Brahman with his own inmost Self, and who, therefore, treats it as an object like any other object. But the Self is never an object in relation to any other subject. It stands self-revealed. No one can doubt that it is real.[7] That it is true cannot be proved and does not require to be proved, for it is the presupposition of all proof. It carries its own certitude with it. The question whether the Self is real and true and the further question as to the relationship in which it stands to matter will arise only to the man who looks at it from the outside, and not to one who looks at it from within. The two standpoints known as *parāk* (extrovert) and *pratyak* (introvert) are clearly distinguished in the Upaniṣad: 'The Lord doomed the senses by turning them outward; therefore, one sees only outward and not inward at all. Some wise man, however, seeking immortality, finds the Self by turning his eyes inward.'[8]

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[2] *'Nahi vijñātuḥ vijñāteḥ viparilopo vidyate, avināśitvāt'* (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV.3.30).

[3] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VII.24.1.

[4] *Ibid.*, VIII.12.3: 'This serene One rises out of this body, reaches the highest light, and appears in his own form.'

[5] *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, III.7; *Chāndogya Upani* VIII.7-12; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV.3.

Let us now examine the category of identity in difference which, according to Aurobindo, applies to the relation between Brahman and the world. This conception is ridden with an inner contradiction. Identity and difference are exact opposites and can never be reconciled. Either we go in for the identity or for the difference, but not for both. It does not improve matters if we assume that the difference is at first contained as a mere potentiality in the identity and that at a later stage, it becomes manifest and actual. Even as a mere potentiality, it is sufficient to disrupt the identity. Nor will it help if we assume that there are two parts or aspects in Brahman, an unchanging and a changing one. We can hardly conceive that Brahman is made up of parts. On such a view, we must be prepared to grant that Brahman will, in course of time, disintegrate and disappear when the parts get separated. As regards two aspects, it is difficult to believe that, when one of them goes on changing, the other remains intact. The process of change which affects one of the two aspects will not leave the other untouched. Hence we must suppose that either both aspects go on changing or that neither of them changes. Both alternatives are unacceptable, because they are one-sided. If both aspects change continually, then, nothing permanent will be left to connect them. A series can never know that it is a series. There must be a standing witness to connect the series of changes and piece them into a whole. If neither aspect changes, then, we will have the fixed and immutable Brahman, which leaves out of account the fact of change and multiplicity which we see all around us. Any theory that we put forward with regard to the relation between Brahman and the world must do justice to both. This can be secured, not by the recognition of parts or aspects in Brahman, but by the adoption of two different standpoints, the intuitive and the intellectual.

At the higher level of intuition, Brahman is pure sentience, devoid of change, one and homogeneous. The same reality, viewed from the standpoint of the intellect, appears as the world characterized by diversity and change. It is well known that the *modus operandi* of the intellect is to break up the original unity that is presented at the level of indeterminate perception into subject and object, and view the latter as a substance, possessing several attributes. The intellect, thus, stands for the principle of differentiation. In one of his minor poems, Śaṅkara has said that Māyā breaks up Brahman into the world, God, and soul.[9] The intellect, no doubt, tries to restore the lost unity by what is known as the process of integration, but it never wholly succeeds in that task. Though the substance and its attributes, as also the knowing subject and the known object are brought into some kind of logical relationship, the sense of distinction is not overcome. To overcome the sense of difference, we must pass beyond the intellect to the plane of intuition. This is the experience of communion in which all differences disappear and the original unity is regained.

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[6] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II.4.12. The translation is that of Swami Madhavananda.

[7] 'The Self (Ātman) is self-determined (*svatassiddhaḥ*). When the Self, the knower (*pramātṛ*), has been determined, then only is possible a search for proper authorities on the part of the knower, with a view to obtain right knowledge. In fact, without determining the Self—"I am I"—none seeks to determine the knowable objects. Indeed, the Self is unknown to nobody' (Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Gītā*, II.18). The translation is that of A. Mahadeva Sastri.

[8] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, IV.1. The translation is that of Professor Hiriyanna.

Śaṅkara, therefore, assigns Brahman to the higher plane of communion (*sākṣātkāra*) and the world to the lower plane of the intellect and the discursive thinking. What is a unitary, homogeneous whole at a higher level, appears as God, soul, and world at a lower level. This is Śaṅkara's solution of the problem of One and Many. He recognizes three orders of reality, the transcendental (*pāramārthika*), empirical (*vyāvahārika*), and phenomenal (*prātibhāsika*). This does not mean that the three are independent realities. It is one and the same reality viewed in three grades or at three different levels. The Highest appears under certain conditions as the *vyāvahārika* and the *prātibhāsika*. The world of diversity in which we live and move and have our being belongs to the *vyāvahārika* level, while illusions (the rope appearing as serpent) and dream experiences belong to the *prātibhāsika* order.

It is remarkable that Śaṅkara concedes some kind of reality even to illusory appearances and dream perceptions. His view is that nothing that is wholly unreal can ever present itself to perception, though it be for a moment (*asat cet na pratīyeta*). The hare's horn or the sky lotus has never been experienced by anybody. They are mere words with no basis in reality. Higher than the *prātibhāsika* stands the *vyāvahārika*. This is an order of reality which enjoys a higher ontological status, because it is the same to different individuals at the same time, and the same to one and the same individual at different times. In the example of the rope appearing as the serpent, the latter belongs to the *prātibhāsika* order, because it is perceived only by one individual, and even that for a brief moment. The former belongs to the higher *vyāvahārika* order, because the rope is a rope to several individuals who see it at a particular moment, and it is seen as a rope by the same individual at different times. The rope is typical of the working order of things while the serpent is typical of illusions and dream experiences. The former is public reality, while the latter is private.

Just as the perception of the serpent is falsified when the perception of the rope arises, even so the perception of the world and its diversity is falsified when one enters into direct and immediate communion with Brahman, which is known as *samyag-darśana* or *aparokṣānubhūti*. When man rises to *Brahma-sākṣātkāra*, the *vyāvahārika sattā* of world order is falsified. It only means that it is consigned to a lower order of reality. It is a well-known fact that when the higher order of knowledge arises, the lower order suffers contradiction. When we know that the object is a mere piece of rope, it follows that the previous knowledge that it was a serpent is sublated. Both cannot be true. The serpent-notion has to be rejected in favour of the rope-notion. Error has only to be eliminated. There is no question of integrating it with truth. Error can never become the truth by any amount of supplementation. Error is error and not partial truth.

Śaṅkara should not be misunderstood when he maintains the unreality of the world order in the wake of the highest experience. It is only when the highest *sākṣātkāra* has come to a man that he will treat the world as '*mithyā*'. Till then, it continues to be quite real, even as our dream experiences appear to be perfectly real, so long as the dream lasts. For all practical purposes, therefore, the world, with all its distinctions that it implies, is quite real. Śaṅkara makes this point quite clear in his commentary on *Vedānta-Sūtra* (II.1.14).[10] In view of this categorical statement, it will be seen that it is hardly fair to describe his philosophy as 'Illusionism'.

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[9] *Māyā-Pañcakam*, 1.

If Spirit is the only reality, then, we have no alternative but to eliminate the not-Self. This implies the dichotomization of the existent into real and unreal, Self and not-Self, truth and error. The law of contradiction, therefore, holds. There is no use seeking to minimize its importance. In the sphere of the highest Truth, there is no place for error. Though Aurobindo rails against the law of contradiction, he unconsciously admits it when he claims the sole truth for his theory of the Integral Absolute, and dubs Śaṅkara's theory as 'Illusionism'. If his theory is the only truth, then, other theories will, automatically, have to be rejected. Thus the law of contradiction reasserts itself. 'None ever went about to break logic but in the end the logic broke him.'

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[10] Memorial Edition, Vol. II. p. 311—'*Tasmāt prāg-brahmātmatā-prabodhāt upapannaḥ sarvo laukiko vaidikaśca vyavahāraḥ.*'

THE MESSAGE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA FOR THE WORLD

By Swami Rasajnananda

Today, the diverse sections of humanity are rising as one man to pay homage to Swami Vivekananda on the occasion of his birth centenary, for his universal outlook is based on the vision of spiritual oneness of mankind and his Vedāntic teachings point to the grand unity behind the bizarre multiplicity of ideas and ideals extant in the world. The music of his message, proclaiming as it does the eternal theme of unity in variety and divinity in humanity, captivates the heart of man, removes his pettiness and exclusiveness, breaks down the barriers of race, politics, and religion, and raises him to the sacred stature of immortal God. In the present day context of a strife-torn and fear-ridden world, the voice of Swami Vivekananda, ever increasing in volume, reaches us to eradicate the modern superstition, suspicion, and hatred, and endows us with absolute fearlessness, happiness, and peace. The light of Swami Vivekananda's message is a blazing but soothing one, potent enough to dispel the deep darkness that often envelops the earth due to devilish designs of man. It is mellow in its coolness and rich in its content to brighten up hope, inspire the life, and illumine the soul of everyone without distinction of clime, colour, or creed.

Swami Vivekananda's universal and uplifting message may be traced to the depth of his love for man and the breadth of his understanding of human affairs which are but the expression, rather the logical outcome, of his Vedāntic perception of non-difference. He accords a pride of place to love, as he opens his heart to a friend in a poem which reads as follows:

> Listen, friend, I will speak my heart to thee,
> I have found in my life this truth supreme—
> Buffeted by waves, in this whirl of life,
> There's one ferry that takes across the sea—
> Formulas of worship, control of breath,
> Science, philosophy, systems varied,
> Relinquishment, possession, and the like,
> All these are but delusions of the mind;
> Love, love—that's the one thing, the sole treasure.

His heart embraces the whole of humanity and he offers himself as a sacrifice at its altar. His love flows into diverse streams and takes on forms suitable to the different climates and requirements. His genius lies in fulfilling the peculiar wants from which a particular individual or a nation suffers. Naturally, his methodology manifests itself in different patterns. Whatever be the pattern, the goal is one: It is nothing less than freedom, total freedom—physical freedom, intellectual freedom, political freedom, economic freedom, social freedom, moral freedom, and above all, spiritual freedom. According to Swami Vivekananda, freedom is the one goal of all nature, sentient or insentient; and, consciously or unconsciously, everything is struggling towards that goal. It is by this yardstick that he measures civilization, development, etc. Is man free from the bondages to which he is subject? It is to emancipate him from the different kinds of fetters and to enable him to realize his full freedom and innate divinity that Swami Vivekananda worked till the last breath of his life. Nay, even after death, he said, he would not cease to work. To quote his own words: 'It may be that I shall find it good to get outside my body—to cast it off like a worn-out garment. But I shall not cease to work. I shall inspire men everywhere until the world shall know that it is one with God.' What an immortal spirit endued with unbounded love for the world!

Men the world over, whom Swami Vivekananda loves to serve, inspire, and illumine, may, by and large, be classified into two groups: (i) the developed and (ii) the under-developed or developing groups. The developed societies possess abundance of wealth and power. With the aid of scientific knowledge and technological invention, they have built up self-sustaining economy and sound politics and enjoy modern amenities, welfare services, social justice, and higher standard of living. Amazing are the benefits conferred by modern science, such as were not thought of a century back, and breath-taking is the prospect of space conquest and journey to the moon. With such power over nature and no dearth of luxuries, the advanced countries can proudly claim peace and plenty. But, alas! a little probing beneath the surface betrays gnawing emptiness in the heart, immense void and distressing insecurity, manifesting itself in unprovoked violence, unwarranted crime, juvenile delinquency, frequent divorces, suicides, and moral laxity. At no time in the history of humanity has man extended the frontiers of knowledge more than today. Paradoxically, at no time was he more peaceless, fear-ridden, and suspicious than today; he is not at peace with himself nor with his neighbour, nor with nature. The edifice of modern civilization is rising high vertically, without corresponding depth of spiritual foundation. Science has placed tremendous energy in the hands of man. But the demoralizing threat of nuclear war and the consequent certainty of annihilation of humanity are haunting him; the recurring tests with radio-active fall-outs contaminate the physical and mental atmosphere. Man in the grip of fear, is the enemy of man. As the power of enjoyment is increased with the help of modern inventions in arithmetical progression, the tempo of desire itself increases in geometrical progression, with the result that man is helplessly enslaved and preyed upon by the internal enemies like greed, lust, anger, etc. The grave problem is how to fight the internal enemies and learn the art of self-conquest. Swami Vivekananda declares that he who conquers self conquers all. In the ultimate analysis, the modern crisis is spiritual.

As a matter of fact, Swami Vivekananda's work in the civilized West mainly relates to the realm of spirit. With his profound knowledge of human affairs and deep study of world history, he emphasizes that no amount of political or social manipulation of human conditions can cure evils of life. History bears witness to the extinction of great civilizations of Rome, Greece, Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, etc., which could boast of political power, social order, and intellectual attainments, but whose structure was based on material values. Swami Vivekananda's kee insight notes the explosive character of the Western civilization and likens it to a volcano which can explode at any time. In his view, what can avert the catastrophe is spirituality, the religion of fearlessness, the Vedānta which makes the best appeal to the rational and scientific mind of modern times. Like Hanumān of epic days, he crosses the ocean with the nectareous message of Vedānta to provide the much-needed pabulum to the spiritually hungry and famished souls of the West. The ovation that he receives at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, and subsequently in other parts of America as well as in Europe, reflects the thirst of the people for eternal truths. Referring to this, Swami Vivekananda says in his address at Calcutta after his return from the West: 'For a complete civilization the world is waiting, waiting for the treasures to come out of India, waiting for the marvellous spiritual inheritance of the race, which, through decades of degradation and misery, the nation has still clutched to her breast. The world is waiting for that treasure; little do you know how much of hunger and of thirst there is outside of India for these wonderful treasures of our forefathers.' Eminent persons like Schopenhauer find in the Indian wisdom sure solace and security which modern sciences fail to give. The great philosopher Schopenhauer wrote: 'In the whole world, there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upaniṣads. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death.' Besides, he foretold: 'The world is about to see a revolution in thought more extensive and more powerful than that which was witnessed by the Renaissance of Greek literature.' Impressed by the influence of the Vedānta on the thinking minds and thirsty souls, Swami Vivekananda preached it extensively and established centres for the propagation of the message of Vedānta where men could drink of the soothing waters of perennial values. It is a happy sign for humanity that there is a world-wide network of such centres and that the demand for them is on the increase.

As regards underdeveloped and developing countries of the East, Swami Vivekananda's work is directed to raising the material standard of the people; for spirituality is a far cry as long as there is impoverishment of the body. However, he views it as a means and does not lose sight of the spiritual goal, because spirituality alone can ensure eternal happiness and peace. With this end in view, his work in India takes the shape of 'elevation of the masses without injuring their religion'. A great nation builder of modern India that he is, Swami Vivekananda wants us to learn from the West politics, economics, sociology, industry, science, technology, etc., and effect improvement in the material condition of living, but takes care to emphasize that all these should be subordinated to the main theme of the nation, that is, religion, lest we should build the edifice on the shifting sands of material values and come to grief. Endowed with a far-sighted vision rare among the present-day leaders, he comprehends the subtle truth behind the unique, unbroken continuity of our life and culture for ages, that religion is the life-force of the nation and, also, anticipates the logical conclusion that, if it goes, death will be the result. Hence, with a motherly heart, full of love for us and concern for our future, he strikes a note of warning that, if in our craze for Europeanization, we happen to give up religion, we shall become extinct as a nation, as a race. Nevertheless, he infuses hope in us, when he utters in a prophetic tone that India will become greater and more glorious than ever before and that she will rise, not with the power of the steel, but with the power of the spirit.

The Vedāntic knowledge that Swami Vivekananda disseminates particularly in Europe and America—the centres of potent Western civilization and splendid social organization and splendid social organization—may be put in a nutshell in his memorable words: 'Each soul is potentially divine.

The goal is to manifest this Divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy—by one, or more, or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas or rituals or books or temples or forms are but secondary details.' Obviously, the Vedānta is noncredal and non-sectarian and is free from dogmas and doctrines. On the other hand, it is broad and universal, as it holds good for man in any time or clime, irrespective of sex, colour, or religion. Marvellously new as it appears when it issues from the lips of the modern Vivekananda, it is very ancient and forms part of the oldest record of religious literature of the world, the Vedas. 'By Vedas', Swami Vivekananda explains, 'no books are meant. They are the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws, discovered by different persons in different times. . . . The discoverers of these laws are *ṛsis*, and we honour them as perfected beings.' Thus the Vedas, not being woven round a prophet or prophets, are impersonal. Rather, the *ṛsis* owe their authority to their exemplifying in their lives the eternal principles enshrined in the Vedas.

By paying homage to truth and not to persons, the Vedāntic approach is in tune with the scientific outlook. The scientific theory of physical unity of matter is an echo of the Vedāntic conception of the solidarity of the universe. The Vedānta goes one step further to demonstrate unity of matter and mind. Nay, undaunted, sacrificing everything, even individuality, it goes to the dizzy heights beyond matter and mind, name and form, time-space-causation, and reaches the Everest of the ultimate reality of supreme Spirit, which is One without a second. The infinite power of Spirit, 'brought to bear upon matter, evolves material development, made to act upon thought, evolves intellectuality, made to act upon itself, makes of man a God'. Based on the scientific enquiry and impersonal investigation of truth, as well as austere discipline of purity, sincerity, and utter renunci tion of personal desires, the Vedānta does n contradict reason. Of all world faiths, t Vedānta alone provides the rationale of soc ethics and morality. Since there is one a the same Spirit in all beings, one injures on self by injuring another and one does good t oneself by doing good to others. No wond that the scientific West was 'fascinated' b such a rational faith. Reminiscent of his e perience in the West, Swami Vivekanan says: 'I have myself been told by some the best Western scientific minds of the da how wonderfully rational the conclusions the Vedānta are. I know one of them pe sonally, who scarcely has time to eat h meals or go out of his laboratory, but wh yet would stand by the hour to attend m lectures on the Vedānta, for, as he express it, they are so scientific, they so exactly harm onize with the aspirations of the age and wi the conclusions to which modern science i coming at the present time.'

In the present-day context of global te sions and threats that are ultimately trac able to spiritual bankruptcy, Swami Vivek nanda has done yeoman service in the cau of humanity by evoking interest in the u lifting Vedānta and starting centres to diffu the saving wisdom handed down as an i valuable legacy by a galaxy of illumined sag and seers of our blessed motherland, wh significant mission among the races of t world is 'the evolution of spiritual humanit The beneficent seed sown by the illustri Vivekananda has grown to a *kalpat* (mythological wish-fulfilling tree), migh enough to give shade and succour to sun-bak and storm-tossed men, women, and childr by fulfilling their diverse wants, whether the spiritual or secular sphere. The befitti homage that we can pay to him on the occ sion of his birth centenary is to hearken his celestial voice, raise and perfect ourselv in the light of perennial philosophy and ma others do the same, so that there may be la ing peace and happiness in the world.

DISCIPLINE

By Sri Jagadishwar Pal

The word 'discipline' is the most discussed topic of the day. The word is used almost every now and then by men whose opinion counts in society—political leaders, teachers, administrators, and social thinkers.

In view of the magnitude of the problem, it is worthwhile to examine the word 'discipline' in the historical perspective.

The word has a long history during which it has acquired many meanings. Wycliff first used it in 1382 in his translation of *Proverbs*: 'Thou shalt finde grace and good discipline before God and man.' It was used in 1548 in a description in connection with the foundation of Eton—'He first holpe his awane young scholars to attain to discipline and for them he founded a solemnpe school at Eton.' It was originally something worthy to be mentioned with the charming word 'grace', something desirable to be found and attained—and not something unpleasant to be administered like medicine with the help of punishment.

This word has as many as six meanings in the dictionary. The first one is 'instruction imparted to disciples or scholars'. The second meaning is 'a branch of instruction or education'. The third meaning is 'instruction having for its aim to form the pupil to proper conduct and action—the training of scholars or subordinates to proper and orderly action by instructing them in the same'. The fourth meaning is 'the orderly conduct and action which result from training'. The fifth meaning is 'the order maintained and observed among pupils'. The sixth meaning is 'correction—chastisement—punishment by way of correction'.

In this evolution of meaning from instruction imparted to disciples to correction and chastisement, the following changes should be noted carefully. 'Disciples or scholars' disappear from the second meaning. More importance is attached to the subject than to the pupil. In the third meaning, the recipients of discipline reappear, but not as a disciple—as a subordinate scholar and a pupil. In the fourth meaning, discipline becomes the result of training. In the fifth meaning, the idea of willing disciples disappears—even the idea of instruction to the pupil goes. They are replaced by the idea of subordinates being trained to produce order. If the personality of the trainer fails to maintain order, the only alternative left is the use of physical force. The sixth meaning of correction and chastisement follows from the fifth. The prevailing view of discipline is that of orderly behaviour which results from training—it is a combination of fourth, fifth, and sixth meanings of the dictionary. Complete depersonalization has taken place in the meaning of the word in course of time, due to socio-economic factors which are not within the scope of the present article.

Punishment is not discipline; nor is it a cure for indiscipline. It is, at best, a negative treatment, useful only occasionally for imposing order so that some form of positive treatment may have a chance of beginning to exert a disciplinary influence. What is this positive treatment then?

The understanding of the problem becomes easier, if we know that discipline comes from the same root as the word disciple. Disciple is translated today by the word 'pupil', and therefore, discipline is connected with disciples, with learning.

Discipline is a practice which appertains to pupils for the realization of perfection already in them. The road that leads there is long, and the journey is difficult. Teachers have the important functions of giving the taught the right kind of treatment—positive and negative: (a) leadership to make them aware of their best human impulses—that there are valuable purposes in life; (b) restraints and checks to prevent them from giving way to their wayward impulses. As Clarke says, 'In the disciplinary relationship, teacher or parent is selfless in the sense of being wholly disinterested—seeking not his own—no interference, but steady wholesome influence.'

A reviewer of the book *Art and Child* by Marion Richardson states in the course of his review as follows: 'Here is a simple-minded woman saturated with a sense of abiding beauty in her world. Here are children devoid of any such sense at all. While maintaining her highest possible intake, she increased to the uttermost sacrifice her output. Of such relationship true teaching consists. That is a phenomenon susceptible of repetition in every subject of the curriculam. . . . There must be a filling of the teacher's soul with such loves. There must be an emptying of the teacher's soul before her scholars—a "passing of something" between them.'

This is a picture not of a disciplinarian, imposing order and imparting instruction, but of a teacher transmitting discipline, an inspired maker of disciples. The obverse is a picture not of subordinates passively or unwillingly accepting instruction, either in a subject or in proper conduct, but of disciples eagerly and actively learning in communion with a teacher.

It will not be irrelevant here if we dilate on the relationship of *guru* and *śiṣya* (teacher and student) as is found in the religious scriptures. The soul can receive impulse from another soul—the person from whose soul such impulse comes is called the *guru*, and the person to whose soul the impulse is conveyed is called the *śiṣya*. To convey such an impulse to any soul, the soul from which it proceeds must possess the power of transmitting it to another. The soul to which it is transmitted must be fit to receive it.

There is a saying in English: 'One lamp lights another'. Following the analogy, we may say that the *guru* is the first lamp and the lamp lighted from him is the disciple. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, 'any selfish motive, such as the desire for gain and name will immediately destroy the conveying medium'. Swamiji gives the definition of a teacher thus: 'The only true teacher is he who can convert himself, as it were, into thousand persons at a moment's notice. The true teacher is he who can immediately come down to the level of the student, and transfer his soul to the student's soul, and see through and understand through his mind. Such a teacher can really teach and none else.'

In order to promote this superb discipline, we need more understanding of the real needs of the pupil, more love, more books and equipments, more space, more small classes and more teachers imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice, and not more police force.

One may well ask whether this superb discipline can be promoted in an 'acquisitive society' which unleashes naked greed, fosters Machiavellian business methods, and drowns all lofty ideas in the 'icy water of egotistical calculation' and lets people gain the world and lose their soul. It should be remembered that dignity resides in thought and not in acquisition.

The spirit of sacrifice, a sense of justice, honesty, fairness, chivalry, moderation, public spirit, respect for human dignity, firm ethical values—people in society must possess all these, before they can attempt to promote discipline in society.

These values can be imbibed in a people who have got character—purity of heart and soul—chastity in word, deed, and thought. Tons of publicity materials and the entire propaganda machinery will fail to instil discipline amongst students and teachers managers and workers, if there is a big gulf of difference between word and action, between theory and practice. It is said that example is better than precept. Discipline cannot grow in a vacuum. Neither can it be promoted by extensive lectures and radio talks, N.C.C. and A.C.C. training, and other extra-curricular activities, unless they are practised in life. To quote Professor Humayun Kabir: 'It may appear a truism, but the fact is that, as in other spheres, here also, example is better than precept. In fact, one might say that in the field of moral feeling and action, example alone matters, values develop naturally out of the total experience of a pupil. ... Just as teaching of hygiene does not, necessarily, make a man healthy, nor knowledge of monetary theory make him rich, knowledge of moral ideas does not necessarily make a man moral. Morality is essentially an attitude of the mind in which values are placed above self-interest. This attitude can be developed only through contact with men who have made it part of their being. ... It cannot be too often said that it is not what the teacher says or tries to teach, but the way in which he lives his life that will have the greatest impact on the young who come in contact with them. Conflicts arise, because the teachers are slack, and often, allow worldly considerations to take precedence over their duty to their pupils.'

So, in the interest of discipline and good life, there should not exist in society a double standard of morality—one standard for the ministers and civil servants, priests, preachers, teachers, etc., and the other for the rest of the people.

Swami Vivekananda used to say that an ounce of work is better than tons of lectures. There has been debates and discussions, conferences and congresses to find out ways and means how to promote discipline in society. In spite of these, indisciplined behaviour is on the increase. Everybody is fed up with tall talks; what is needed is action, and the motive force behind this action must be selfless.

The disease of indiscipline has been diagnosed and the medicine has been found. The medicine is nothing short of promotion of attainments of character, viz. spirit of sacrifice, a sense of justice, honesty, purity, fairness, chivalry, moderation, public spirit, and respect for human dignity in the people at large.

Now the question arises whether these ideal traits of character can be cultivated in an acquisitive society where the dominant tone is material and personal gain at any cost, when civilization is becoming subject to a Gresham's Law (bad money drives away good money), and it becomes difficult for anything better to hold its own.

Socio-economic structure and mode of production determine to a great extent the way of life of the people in society. Religion is, also, not outside the scope of this economic determination. To quote Swami Vivekananda: 'There (runs) an economic struggle through every religious struggle. This animal called man has some religious influence, but he is guided by economy. Individuals are guided by something else, but the mass of mankind never made a move, unless economy was involved. You may preach a religion that may not be perfect in every detail, but if there is an economic background to it, and you have the most ardent champions to preach it, you can convince a whole country. Whenever any religion succeeds, it must have economic value. Thousands of similar sects will be struggling for power, but only those who meet the real economic problems will have it. Man is guided by the stomach. He walks and the stomach goes first and the head afterwards. It will take ages for the head to go first.'

So the character of individuals can be regenerated according to the dictum stated above. But the problem of the mass of the people will remain. The moot point is how regeneration is to be brought about in their character, without some kind of revolutionary change in society. It is for the political pundits and social scientists to say whether that is possible through revolution or peaceful co-existence, through dictatorship or freedom, through the preaching of Vedāntic equality or through the socialistic pattern of society.

THE FREEDOM OF TRUE RELIGION

By Mr. Guy Laberge

The human soul is in search of great freedom. Because the basic ingredient of the soul is Spirit, and Spirit is perfectly free, the soul seeks to unify itself consciously with the great freedom it intuitively feels. The real Self of man, the Christ, is perfectly free. If this was not so, it would be impossible for the soul to experience any suffering whatsoever. The shadow on the ground would not exist, if the light of the sun did not exist. An object such as a tree is an obstruction to the rays of the sun producing a shadow. The light of the Christ perpetually shines, but our imperfect concepts of reality obstruct the rays of the Christ, producing our shadowy experiences. As a result, we fail to find the true freedom of the soul.

Ramakrishna, a very great soul of the last century, put this in other words; he said: 'The wind of God's grace is always blowing, and we have to simply unfurl our sails and thus catch the breeze. The idle and the lazy, not acting properly, fail to reap the benefit; but the active and the prompt receive and enjoy the grace of God.'

For thousands of years, mankind has been faced with a dilemma which has been difficult to resolve. Faced with suffering, lack, limitation, and death, man, through fear of these, has been compelled to delve into religion which, in most instances, has failed to clear up this dilemma. Man has associated with his religious beliefs a long list of 'don'ts'. Religion has often pounded into the individual many beliefs which have appeared to limit the individual's expression. In the old Jewish religion, the Sabbath was so strongly observed that it was almost impossible to breathe without committing a sin. Many of us have given credence to countless rituals, creeds, and dogmas, believing that, through participation in these, we would consciously discover the complete inner freedom we so desperately sought. Many of us have been gravely disappointed that we did not find in religion anything which would bring us this inner freedom.

Let us not be too hasty, however, in judging or criticizing any of our former beliefs or the religion of others in the world. When a person goes deep enough in thought, he begins to understand that all religions are here, because they are fulfilling a purpose. Although it might seem very disappointing in retrospect, our former religious beliefs played a very important part in our spiritual development. At a certain stage of this development we needed visible signs, symbols, and rituals to convey to us different religious ideas. Many of us found it very difficult to believe anything that we could not see, hear or feel. This is why dogmas, rituals, and visible signs of worship were needed by many of us, so that we would have something concrete to believe in, because of our inability to believe in the unseen. Let us not blame our upbringing or our religious past for any apparent bondage. We were in this or that religion because we had certain lessons to glean from it. Because of our inability to grasp the

Absolute in our thoughts and feelings, we needed something concrete to believe in.

Once a minister made a sermon about how wonderful children were, that they were actually little angels in the absolute, because their souls were so pure. The next day he was seen to lose his temper at little children who were walking in the fresh cement walk in front of the church. They were having a lot of fun leaving their imprints on the fresh cement. One of his parishioners, witnessing this, jokingly reminded him of his sermon the day before. The minister replied: 'Yes, yes, that's true, I like children in the absolute *but I don't like them in the concrete.*' As we grow spiritually we leave concrete forms of religion behind and begin to encompass within our souls more and more of the absolute concepts.

Ramakrishna was known to have also said, all religions are true at different levels of understanding. Let us forever remember that all religions are meeting the needs of their followers at their own levels. Religions are brought into being by an infinite Spirit as a result of mankind's desires, and these desires are at all levels of the spiritual ladder. This is the meaning of Jacob's ladder, a step by step realization of Truth. In his dream, Jacob saw angels ascending and descending on this ladder. These are symbolic of religious thoughts being present at all levels of spiritual understanding. In other words, there is good in all religions. Understanding this, let us be forever at peace with all the religions of the world.

What do we mean by the freedom of true religion? What is true religion in the first place? The word 'religion' comes from the latin word *religio*, which means to bind back again. The purpose of religion is to bind us back to God in consciousness. When this is achieved, we have the highest form of religion possible. When we are bound back to God in consciousness, great freedom is experienced. This is the freedom of true religion. The Christ is then experienced as eternally free. This is the highest freedom the soul can ever know. In this state of consciousness, rituals, dogmas, set forms, churches, and meetings become unnecessary. There will come a time in the experience of the race where all religions and religious movements will cease. The individual will, then, have discovered that the highest sacrament is within himself. A person reaching this understanding has no need for relying on anyone or anything. Even metaphysical movements such as we have today will no longer be necessary. That's the purpose of religion, to guide us there. We must remember that this is the highest form of religion. We must also remember that we are not there yet, and that we are at the present just experiencing glimpses of this eternal freedom. All religions are steps to this goal. If we belong to a metaphysical movement, the chances are that we are more advanced on the path. We have left behind the need for rituals and dogmas. We are beginning to grasp more of Truth, without the need of symbols of Truth. As we continue to study Truth and continue to meditate, we come nearer and nearer our goal. As we look back on religious history, we see this gradual unfoldment very clearly. The earliest man had very crude forms of religious worship, then came the witch doctor, then the priest and organized religion, and then the metaphysical movements which are destined to be great religions. In our metaphysical movements, we have the greatest teachings in the world, but once again, these are but another step on the path.

Becoming free in consciousness is a very gradual process. We reach a certain plateau where we experience great freedom over the past, and we have no sooner settled down in that consciousness when we are beckoned to come higher. Reaching a new plateau, our past in retrospect often appears as bondage. We have all experienced greater freedom through 'Truth' teachings, but the time will come when we will look back on this present experience and call this bondage, too. This is the way we grow spiritually. We go from one level of understanding to a higher one, from one glory to another glory.

While it is true that a man has a free will, this does not mean that he is free. Man is free to think thoughts only at the level of consciousness he finds himself in. The thoughts of the criminal are not the thoughts of the saint. Man binds himself or frees himself by his own thinking. Philosophers have argued for ages whether or not man has a free will. In 'Truth', this is seen so clearly. A man is free only at his level of understanding, as his understanding increases so does his freedom. A prisoner is free to move about the prison yard, but a wall prevents him from going further. He is free to do a lot of things inside that prison, but he is, also, prevented from doing many things a man outside can do. On the other hand, the man outside has many invisible walls of fear, doubt, and guilt, which prevent him from thinking free thoughts, which the higher soul constantly thinks. As we begin to grow spiritually, God gives us greater and greater freedom in our thoughts. Ramakrishna gives the following illustration: 'A cow is tied to a post with a rope, and she is free to move within the limits of the rope. If the cow, being obedient, behaves well, then, the owner increases the length of the rope, and thus gives her more freedom. And, when the owner is fully satisfied with the good behaviour of the cow, he may let her free without the rope. On the contrary, if the cow does not behave well, the little freedom she got will be curtailed, and she may even remain tied tightly to the post without any freedom whatsoever. So also has God given us free will, and expects us to use it well; thus we deserve His grace, which ultimately brings us complete salvation. Then such a one never violates God's commandments and continues to be virtuous throughout.' Religion is not meant in the least to bind us or to limit us, but is meant to lead us to the highest freedom the soul can ever know, Christ-consciousness.

We sense at our present level of spiritual development the great freedom of the Christ. Religion is guiding all of humanity in that general direction. Regardless of where a person is in consciousness, his religion is giving him the highest freedom he can grasp. Freedom is experienced in all religions, but at different levels of consciousness. What one person considers freedom in his religion is bondage to you and me. What we consider as freedom at this level is, undoubtedly, considered bondage by a very highly advanced soul. This is the eternal process, moving from one level of freedom into a higher one. Let us give thanks for the signposts of the many religions of the world, all pointing the way to the Infinite.

GANDHIAN SYSTEM OF EDUCATION AND RELIGION

By Mr. Shamsuddin

It was Mahatma Gandhi who, while pointing out that 'the whole system of education in India was defective', observed that 'religion is absent from the very basic principles of education and that is why humanitarian feelings are miserably suffering.' In his view, the defeat of the high purpose of education in India was due to the seeds of materialistic outlook of life sown by the foreign rulers, which had resulted in the spiritual and physical starvation of the country. Gandhiji discovered the cure for this malady in the scheme of basic education, with piety as one of the many forceful agents to bring about the desired cure

A REVOLUTIONARY STEP

Basic Education is, really, a revolutionary step in the field of education. Its aim is not only to solve the problem of bread and butter, but to provide food for the soul as well. This scheme embraces physical and mental development along with spiritual enlightenment to make man all-round and really educated.

Under the present circumstances, the problem of education in India, really speaking, is largely the problem of money. The Mahatma found his solution by making education self-supporting, and basic education has been started on grounds of self-sufficiency.

The main feature of this system is that the centre of all education is the learning of some craft. In view of the environments and prevailing local conditions around the child, all learning is imparted to him through some craft. In fact, it aims at the development of the physical, mental, and moral powers of the child, in short, his all-sided progress and perfection.

In India, majority of the people are such as do not get even the bare daily necessities of life. Many of them rarely obtain even one meal a day or have sufficient clothes to cover them. The Gandhian system of basic education makes every satisfactory provision for their training in crafts, such as spinning, weaving, wood-work, etc., and also, gardening, agriculture, and so on, which does help them to fulfil the bare needs of life which are essential. Thus the child not only develops intellectually, but also gets good moral build-up and is able to lead a better social life. Basic education is true to 'the kindred points of heaven and home'.

REAL MEANING OF RELIGION

Indian culture has all along been influenced by religion in the broadest sense of the term. The Sanskrit word *'dharma'* is originated from the root *'dhṛ'*, which means, 'to put on or to accept'. Whatever is truth and worth accepting is *dharma*, while the rest is *adharma*. This is the popular meaning of *dharma* or religion, according to the Śāstras. It may be this or that religion, but all religions aim at one common universal aim—a lofty moral and a humanitarian outlook.

Gandhiji considered religion as one of the indispensable items in the system of education. His opponents took opportunities for criticizing him for the absence of any provision of religious book in the syllabus of basic education. In reply to these critics, Dr. Zakir Hussain said: 'There is no State religion in India. There are followers of various religions; and as such, the teaching of any particular religious book cannot be undertaken here in this land. Moreover, the Gandhian system of basic education provides equal consideration to all religions. It teaches the broad moral principles common to all religions. Truth, non-violence, love for the country, moral uplift, and so on are common in all great religions. Gandhian system of education, in fact, develops all the good qualities of head and heart in such a way that there is an all-round development of the full personality of the child, making him a patriot in the real sense. In this way, we find close relationship between basic education and religion.'

DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONALISM

The basic system of education in all its principles and methods encourages religion in the broadest sense. Consequently, not only religion and morality, but culture and civilization as well, improve the citizen, resulting in national enlightenment. As an example, basic education imparts instruction through the mother tongue, which fosters feelings of love for the motherland and national culture.

Today, our country is considerably influenced by Western civilization, which, in body and mind, is more or less foreign to us, and its soul is enshrouded in the mist. Foreign language, introduced as medium of instruction by Lord Macaulay, is largely responsible for this. The aim behind that education, probably, was that Indians should forget their culture and civilization and become slaves in all respects.

In this connection, Dr. Iqbal remarks: 'If you mean to destroy a particular community, strike at the language spoken by that community.' Realizing this, Mahatma Gandhi rightly introduced national language in the place of English. 'By the medium of the mother tongue,' he said, 'people will develop love for their own ancient literature.' He was right when he found that people would not only revive their own culture, but, at the same time, elevate their ethical and aesthetical standard of life, by the intensive study of their mother-tongue.

COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

Another aim of Gandhian system of education is to impart knowledge of petty, yet useful, home industries and popularize them in villages. With the influence of Western civilization, India today is, also, advancing towards industrialization and harmful capitalism.

The plight of the rural population remains as usual. People of the urban area as well sail in the same boat. The education they receive leads them nowhere. The great problem of unemployment is before the nation.

INTEGRATED SCHEME OF EDUCATION

The Gandhian system of education provides the cure to all these ailments. Its aim is replacing large scale industries by small cottage industries. It can check corruption and moral degeneration caused by the unhealthy atmosphere generated by capitalism. Knowledge of various small industries will provide individuals with work at their own convenience, and to their taste, inside their own homes. Members of the family will work together, and as such, the home atmosphere will remain free of all unhealthy possibilities and will be religious. The moral standard will improve as the result of this practical religious training.

All the prevailing distinctions between man and man will be reduced. Proper knowledge of farming and tilling the soil will enable the agriculturist to reap the best fruit of his labour. Similarly, in cities, the educated public can and will have to work. At present, they do not understand the dignity of labour and discard physical work. They will come to know that work is worship and labour is love of the Lord.

Thus they will follow practical religious life. Indifference towards religion and morality in India can be traced largely to the empty stomach and tattered clothes. Who can deny that poverty is mainly the cause of all crime and of lack of religion in the people? 'Beg, steal, or borrow', under such circumstances, is apparently the only means of fulfilling their basic necessities of life. They have not a moment to give thought to religion or piety. The teaching of basic education will remove many present-day disabilities and tend to foster a spirit of true religion among the masses.

The age of science, of atom and hydrogen, of man-made satellite, has made man more or less an arch-devil. The existence of God is outrageous to his dignity. He is turning into a beast, is tearing and devouring his own kin. He is not far from bringing his own end.

The impending catastrophe is visible in the ugliest form. Gandhiji foresaw all this, and he discovered a way of deliverance. It is his system of basic education which embraces religious education in its true form. It is this education, with its abiding values, which will raise the Indian population and make them worship work and not wealth, society and not self, deity and not devil. It will bring about physical improvement, social progress, and cultural advancement.

Let teachers, therefore, make a beginning in that direction, 'heart within and God o'er head', which will make the learner understand religion or religions, with neither pride nor prejudice.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The late Pandit Jagadish Chandra Chatterji was an erudite scholar of Indian philosophy. In this learned article, he refutes with sound arguments the common charge against the Buddha that he was a Nihilist, inasmuch as he is said to have denied the existence of Ātman as an eternal and permanent entity. He copiously quotes the original Buddhistic sources and goes to show that the 'Tathāgata-Consciousness' of the Buddha is identical with the Ātman in the highest Vedic sense. . . .

Sri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer, M.A., formerly Professor of Philosophy, Annamalai University, Madras State, in his learned article 'Sri Aurobindo and Śaṅkara on the Absolute', compares the views of Sri Aurobindo and Śaṅkara about the nature of the Absolute. His thoughtful analysis and deductions will be found helpful in understanding the philosophy of Advaita, as enunciated by the great Ācārya, specially when it is examined against the critical dissertation of one of the best minds of the modern times. . . .

Swami Rasajnananda is of the Ramakrishna Order. In his article, he shows how the message of Swami Vivekananda, if properly understood and sincerely adhered to, can remedy many of the ills of present-day human society, and how it can bring lasting peace and happiness in the world. . . .

'Discipline' is one of the most necessary elements for success either in individual or in social life. But its proper implementation and imbibition have always been a problem, as also its concepts have been varied. Sri Jagadishwar Pal, M.A., LL.B., of Calcutta University, in his article on the subject, has tried to clarify what 'discipline' should mean, and has also suggested some ways and means of making it more effective, specially among our students of today. . . .

Mr. Guy Laberge, Minister, Church of Religious Science, Pacific Palisades, California, U.S.A., writes about the 'Freedom of True Religion' in this issue. He says that the aim of all religions is to enable their followers to enjoy the highest freedom of Spirit. This is possible by a gradual process of advancement from lower levels to higher ones, and different religions are only the means to help men in passing through these levels. Each religion is true and useful, and fulfils the needs of this spiritual advancement, at different time. . . .

Mr. Shamsuddin, B.A.B.T., F.R.G.S. of Raipur, in his article 'Gandhian System of Education and Religion', deals with the principles on which Gandhiji based his system of basic education. The writer says that, along with introduction of the teaching of crafts with languages and subjects, special stress is laid in this system on the inculcation of the basic principles of religions also, which, in their width of vision and spirit of toleration, equips the individual with the best traditions of noble life and makes for physical improvement, social progress, and cultural advancement of both the teacher and the taught.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

COLLECTED PAPERS OF PROFESSOR S. S. SURYANARAYANA SASTRI. EDITED BY DR. T. M. P. MAHADEVAN. *Published by the University of Madras, 1961. Pages xix+441. Price Rs. 20.*

Professor S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri has been one of our great Idealists in this century. Translating and editing important Advaitic texts, he found time to publish a number of papers on history, political theory, logic and epistemology, metaphysics, and law. Of these, forty-seven are brought together into the present volume. They cover the wide range of his interests, though a large number are purely epistemological and metaphysical.

Starting as a follower of Appayya Dīkṣita's Śivādvaita, Professor Sastri soon became a Bradleyan. Gradually, he came to accept with deep conviction the general framework of Advaita. Strangely enough, the empirico-pragmatical tendency in him drew him largely to Maṇḍana and Vācaspati, with the curious result that he rejected some of the tenets of Śaṅkara. While a number of Indian philosophers have been reading a Bradley or a Kant into Śaṅkara, Professor Sastri came to develop his Advaita in an eclectic manner, on the foundations laid by Maṇḍana. Thus he accepts *sphoṭa*, the continuity of the empirical with the transcendental—a strange spatialization of time and of eternity—and *sarvāmukti*, besides trying to harmonize the Prabhākara school of Mīmāṁsā with that of Maṇḍana. Surely, Vācaspati would not have countenanced it even for a wink, let alone the rejection of *jñānād eva tu kaivalyam*. The doctrinal changes introduced by Sarvjñātman and Appayya Dīkṣita provide the basis of Professor Sastri's thought.

This volume deserves to be gone through carefully by all serious students of Advaita. It is sure to provide a point of departure for all those genuinely interested in restating Śaṅkara's position to the modern mind. As Professor Sastri knew well, we owe the greatest debt to Śaṅkara, and it is our duty to restate the system of the Master, taking into account all that has been said for or against it.

Dr. P. S. Sastri

THE BASIS OF SCIENTIFIC THINKING. By Samuel Reiss. *Published by Philosophical Library Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York-16. 1961. Pages 262. Price $4.75.*

The leading scientists who formulated the laws of nature made use of thought processes, of whose nature they were not conscious. What was *unconsciously* employed by the scientist and the creative artist was brought up to the conscious level and revealed in all its details by the logician. It then became abundantly clear that psychological processes were basic or fundamental to conceptual thinking. The author of the book under review uses the term 'psycho-logic' to highlight the simultaneity of logical and psychological processes in meaningful thinking. Perhaps, we may say that psychology is concerned more with the process than with the product, and more with the logic than with the process of thinking. 'Psycho-logic' deals with both at once. What is of great value in the book is the emphasis that the author lays on the *unconscious* psychological processes in thinking. Just as Freud 'sought to obtain an insight into the nature of the complex by penetrating beneath surface phenomena to the unconscious,' so also, psycho-logic is concerned with exhibiting the unconscious foundation that underlies the explicit formulation of concepts, such as are applied to the sciences' (p. 10).

Prefacing his detailed analysis of the conceptu structure of the sciences with a brief summary of wha he has said elsewhere on 'Language and Meanin Chapter II), the author probes into biological thinki and tries to establish the reality of mind simply as result of the analysis of the concept of organism, wi its intimately associated concepts of structure an function, together with the concept of self-maintenan of the organism (Chapter III). This analysis is e tended to cover all aspects of recent biological (Chapte IV & V), and even psychological (Chapter V) think ing. It is finally shown that *mind* is fundamental to a the postulates, hypotheses, and deductions encountere in biology and psychology. In the succeeding chapte (Chapters VII to X), the psycho-logic probe is appli to mathematics and physical science. The result is th same. 'The incompleteness of any physical theory, in th last analysis, reflects the fact ... that there cannot b any significance to any concept of a physical world, ap from an *interpreting* mind' (p. 226). Therefore, pur on the basis of psycho-semantic analysis, the reality o mind has been established. The book conclu (Chapter XI) with an impressive summary of th entire argument advanced in its body.

Of the value of the book in enlarging the field o our vision, there can be little doubt. But the revie has, for a long time, held the view that semantics i the 'grin without the cat' of *Alice in Wonderla* 'Psycho-logic-semantics' has brought back the head o the cat behind the grin. But there is more to th story—the body, and life energizing the body. Wh is the *unconscious* motive force that drove mind out o physical, biological, and behaviouristic psychologi sciences? The answer will be very revealing, as i will uncover the unconscious of the scientists.

Professor P. S. Na

PRINCIPLES OF TANTRA. By Arthur Aval (Sir John Woodroffe). *Published by Ganesh & C (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras-17. Third editi Pages 787. Price Rs. 30.*

The *Tantra-Tattva* of Srijukta Shiva Cha Vidyarnava Bhattacharya Mahodaya is the most e haustive and clear exposition of Tantra Śāstra in i various aspects, and it is to the credit of Arthur Ava that this great work was first published in the Eng language in 1914. The present edition, like its prece one, contains the two parts of the book together u one cover, thus making it a unit in itself and handy.

The first part, with an elaborate and masterly int duction by Arthur Avalon, deals with the philos and principles of Tantra Śāstra, and expl and establishes through learned discussions comparative studies of various other schools the si icance and importance of the various principles of Tantra and the methods of *sādhanā* and rituals. Various topics such as 'Appearance and Applicability of the Tantra Scripture', 'What is the Necessity for the Tantras when there is the Veda?', 'What is Śāstra?', 'What is Śakti?', 'Śiva and Śakti' have been taken up for study and discussion and have been dealt with with adequate ability and clarity.

The second part, which is mostly the work of Jnanendralal Majumdar and has a very learned and fairly exhaustive introduction by Sri Barada Kanta Mazumdar, deals with the practical, ritualistic, and esoteric aspects of the Tantra Śāstra. The topics dealt with include 'On Mantra', 'Lettered and Unlettered Sound', 'On the Guru', 'The Play of Guṇas', 'Outer Worship', 'Ceremonial Worship', etc. The methods, importance, and utility of various Tāntric rituals and practices have been described and explained with authoritative quotations from various scriptures, and efforts have been made with strong arguments to drive home into the mind of the reader the necessity of Tāntric *sādhanās*.

As is natural, at places, the arguments and discussions look as if being one-sided and prejudicial, but in a book like this, where a particular philosophy and way of spiritual life is given supremacy over others, such things are bound to come in the way of its exposition. But this fact remains a matter of common agreement that the present work is, perhaps, the most authentic and exhaustive book for knowing and understanding the principles of Tantra—which, in India, is held in very high esteem and is regarded as a very important way of spiritual unfoldment. The publishers deserve the gratitude of scholars and seekers for having published this valuable book once again, and that so elegantly and carefully. Printing, binding, and general get-up are all very commendable.

S. C.

EPISTEMOLOGY OF BHAṬṬA SCHOOL OF PŪRVA-MĪMĀṀSĀ. By Govardhan P. Bhatt. *Published by The Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Post Box 8, Varanasi-1. 1962. Pages 436. Price Rs. 20.*

This is, no doubt, a scholarly work on the epistemology of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa in three parts. Books I and II contain detailed and critical discussions on knowledge and various sources of knowledge, while Book III deals with the problems of substance, self, and universe.

The author's treatment of various topics is based on a first hand study of original texts. The book is well-documented. English books on the philosophy of the Mīmāṁsā school are not many in number. Dr. Jha's books on the subject are the only available authentic works on Mīmāṁsā topics. Epistemological thoughts of the Kumārila school, however, remained almost untouched for a long time. By publishing the book under review, the author has filled up an undesirable chasm in Indian epistemology.

The work is, however, not without defects. For example, while dealing with the theories of other schools, the author has not been able to represent their views in proper spirit. On page 12, he states: 'The Puruṣa of the Sāṅkhya system is neither a knower, nor a doer, nor an enjoyer.' The Puruṣa is a pure subject (*draṣṭā*). Anyone familiar with the Sāṅkhya definition of Puruṣa knows that the Sāṅkhya has defined Puruṣa as *draṣṭā*, *bhoktā*, and *akartā*. This '*bhoktṛ-bhāva*' of Puruṣa is still a controversial issue in the philosophy of Sāṅkhya. Moreover, ordinarily, we find that a seer is also the knower of objects. The author has not clarified the sense in which Puruṣa, though the eternal *draṣṭā*, is not actually the '*pramātā*' of the various worldly objects. It seems the author himself is not very clear on this point, because he has sensed incoherence in the Sāṅkhya definition of Puruṣa as the pure subject (*draṣṭā*). In his opinion, if Puruṣa is the seer, then he is bound to see always the products of Prakṛti as a seer cannot exist in the absence of the 'seen'. Truly speaking, '*draṣṭṛtva*' or pure subjectivity of Puruṣa in the Sāṅkhya sense implies simply the capability of the self to reveal anything which happens to be related to it. This revealing capacity constitutes the essence of Puruṣa, and so, Puruṣa is never deprived of it. Hence, it is always the pure subject, although, in the state of liberation, it turns away from the worldly-show. In the state of liberation, Puruṣa is separated from *buddhi*, and so there is no object-cognition for the self.

On page 389, again, while criticizing the Buddhistic views, the author has said that, according to Buddhism, each moment 'gathers all the past impressions from its predecessor, passes them on to its successor, and is destroyed completely'. I am not aware that, according to the Buddhistic theory of dependent origination, a moment passes on the same impressions to its successor which it has inherited from its predecessor.

In the concluding paragraph of almost every chapter, the author has given his original comments. These, though stimulating, are insufficient because of their sketchy nature.

The book is nevertheless a valuable addition to the literature on the Mīmāṁsā school.

Dr. Anima Sen Gupta

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA SARISHA, 24-PARGANAS

Report for the years 1956 to 1958

This centre, established in 1921, is mainly devoted to educational work, providing for general and scientific education, technical education, social education, basic education at all levels, audio-visual units, and library service, both for boys and girls.

Ramakrishna Mission Siksha Mandir Boys' Multi-purpose Higher Secondary School: Started in 1923 as a lower primary school, it has now developed into a multi-purpose higher secondary school with humanities, science, and technical as elective courses. In 1958, there were 22 teachers on the staff. In 1956, 19 boys were sent up for class X examination, of whom 15 passed; in 1957, all the 20 students sent up for examination came out successful.

Besides physical education in various forms, there were facilities for N.C.C. and A.C.C. training. Various extra-curricular activities such as socials, dramatics, debates, exhibitions, excursions, and social services were gone through.

The attached hostel accommodated 125 boarders in 1958, including five Santhal boys. The school library contained more than 3,000 volumes of well-chosen juvenile literature; in 1958, 1045 books were issued.

The Senior Basic School: Comprising classes VI, VII, and VIII, this school was started in 1957 by converting a part of the middle section of the High School. Strength in 1958: 91. Staff: 5.

Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Mandir Girls' Multi-purpose Higher Secondary School: This girls' school, started in 1927 as a primary school, has risen to the present status with a strength of 217. Twenty per cent of the pupils enjoys free-studentship. The number of staff in 1958 was 23. Here, too, considerable emphasis was laid on physical education under trained experts and there was ample scope for extra-curricular activities also. The hostel accommodated 65 girls, of whom 5 were free and 7 enjoyed concessions. Technical training was given to 40 trainees in the technical section of the school. The library had 1,829 volumes in 1958. The number of books issued was 796. The School has its own buses to bring students from long distances.

Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Mandir Junior Basic Training College for Women: In 1958, this institution had a strength of 51 students, all residential. Started in 1950, the school has since then grown, maintaining at the same time its bright results. Number of staff including principal and medical officer: 7. The library contains books and journals of pedagogical interest. An exhibition room is maintained, where handiworks of trainees are preserved with great care.

Junior Basic Schools: Comprising three units, these schools had a strength of 380, of which 197 were boys and 183 girls. The number of staff was 13. Elaborate arrangements for creative activity is provided by these schools.

Pre-basic School: In 1958, this school had a strength of 36. The children are brought and sent back by a special bus every day.

Social Education Department: In 1958, there were ten centres (6 for men and 4 for women) for social education, meant to improve village life. Average roll strength was 167, of which 114 were men and 53 women.

Community Centre: There are two community centres, one for men and another for women, each with a strength of 21. These centres devote themselves to social and literary education.

Youth Camps: Organized annually, separately for boys and girls, these camps give the opportunity to the participants for road construction and other works in rural areas. In addition to work projects, activities such as cultural classes, discussion, entertainments, village-survey, etc., too, form part of the camp life.

Vivek-Bharati Patha Bhawan: The social education scheme includes this area library also. In 1958, the library, with its various feeder centres, issued 7,035 books. The total number of books in the library was 4,304.

Audio-visual Unit: Documentary film shows, comprising films of social and educational interest were exhibited by this department. The number of shows held in 1958 was 110.

Charitable Dispensary: This Homoeopathic dispensary treated 1,943 patients in 1957, of which 1,096 were new cases.

Relief Work: The Ashrama did relief operations when a small-pox epidemic broke out in the nearby villages of Nainan and Gazipur.

Milk Distribution: Skimmed milk was distributed to boys, girls, and children belonging to the different schools of the Mission, during recesses.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVIII APRIL 1963 No. 4

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—:o:—

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Allahabad Math, December 14, 1925

Swami Vijnananandaji was to leave for Belur Math on the following day by the Punjab Mail, and numerous devotees had, therefore, come to see him in the evening. He said: 'I always chalk out my plans in advance and, if necessary, make alterations according to circumstances. It is quite likely that I shall go to the station and wait there from 9 o'clock tomorrow morning. Yes, that's my habit' (The Swami used to go to the station three or four hours ahead of time).

A newly-arrived *brahmacārin* was to stay in the Math. Maharaj called the *brahmacārin* of the Allahabad Math and said: 'Don't make him work too much. He has come here to have some rest.' The *brahmacārin* replied: 'No, Maharaj, he won't have to do anything. He will be quite comfortable here.'

Maharaj laughed aloud and said: 'Your words remind me of Gopalda. He and Nityananda Maharaj were staying in Belur Math along with several monks and *brahmacārins*. Calling them, Nityananda Swami told: "Well, look here, come and dig up this plot of land. I shall raise brinjals and potatoes here." They started digging up. Seeing this, Gopalda said: "Oh, what a hard labour they are put to! Come away, all of you, boys! Should they be made to work so hard?" Gopalda took them along with him. Then, he told them quietly: "You better dig up this plot for flower beds." The soil of the latter plot was harder than the first. Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) and other monks had a hearty laugh when they heard Gopalda saying that. I am, therefore, always reminded of Gopalda when someone takes pity on another and wants to make him comfortable.'

The talk turned on the subject of the Fourth Dimension. Maharaj said: 'It is beyond the range of intellectual comprehension. Can it be easily known? Just see. We are told to remember God. But it is often forgotten that He cannot be comprehended by the human mind; He is beyond it. The finite cannot grasp the Infinite, the part can never contain the whole. The finite mind realizes that God is outside it; but, even then, it feels satisfied with whatever it can know about Him. But does this mean the whole knowledge of God?'

It was quiet on all sides, with the cloudless sky overhead. While speaking, Maharaj was often getting absent-minded. Looking at the stars, he said: 'They are my friends, see how bright they are.' After remaining silent for some time, he asked one of the company to tell a story. When the request for a story was made to Maharaj himself, he said jokingly: 'Am I to be a granny at last? Yes, everything is a fairy tale, really. If you can think of the world as unreal, how happy you can be! Trouble arises when you think of it as a reality.'

In this connection, Maharaj mentioned a Greek philosopher about whom he said: 'He used to tell the boys that the world was a dream. That was his view. In those days, learned men used to mix with boys who would be the citizens of the future and on whose proper upbringing depended the future welfare of the country. But boys are always naughty; one day, they brought a piece of rope with which they strongly tied the philosopher's feet, and started dragging him along the road. When his body was badly bruised, they asked him: 'Do you still maintain that the world is a dream?' He said: 'Yes, I do, but it is now a very painful dream.' Boys think that all dreams are pleasant. But it is not so; dreams can be both pleasant and unpleasant.

'The Master used to say: "There is a deep lake with very sweet water in it. Will you drink the water sitting on its side or will you dive in and drink? The lake is full of nectar, and if you dive in it, you will have eternal life, you will be blessed with immortality."

'Meditation on God should make you mad for Him and forget everything else. God is the eternal fountain-head of life. Great souls have all immersed themselves in that ambrosial spring. No spiritual aspirant can become great without completely identifying himself with Him. We see in the life of the Holy Prophet of Islam that he had his wives and relatives, but at midnight, he would get up to pray to God.

'You should meditate on Him at night. Worldly distractions make us forget Him, and that is why you should invoke Him at night. And you should do it with earnestness, as if you have received summons from the other world, and you are going to meet Him presently. We are neither here nor there; we are neither fish, nor flesh, nor good red herring. What infinite love the Master bore towards Swamiji! At the same time there have been occasions when Swamiji and others sat around him, but his mind was soaring so high, with his entire being concentrated on God, that he saw them all as if through a haze and said: "Who are you all?"'

Allahabad Math, January 21, 1926

In the evening, there was a big gathering of local devotees. On the subject of universal love and brotherhood, Swami Vijnanananda said: 'Selfishness has got the whole nation in its grip. But, again, without the pursuit of self-interest, the world would be at a standstill. Self-interest, however, should not be conceived in narrow and limited terms. Living for the little self is but death. But he who sacrifices his life for the good of the many is living truly. The little self which centres round one's own person and close relatives will be of no benefit to the world. Greater the man, broader is his self. …

'Our Master was the embodiment of purity. Any discussion on a sacred topic would throw him into a trance. People of all communities would find pleasure in his company and would think of him as one of themselves. His attitude was liberal and all-embracing. He never confined himself within any narrow boundaries.

'You have read in the *Gītā* that God incarnates Himself when virtue declines and vice prevails. The significance of this verse is that, whenever our universal outlook becomes narrow and the mind becomes cramped in this narrowness, sacred and liberal ideas—ideas connected with the Infinite—appear once again. Your goodwill should flow out for the whole world. Your daily prayers should include an invocation for the good of all. One has to have the spirit of renunciation, excluding petty selfishness. All quarrels, bickerings, and conflicts are due to this pettiness of narrow self-interest. You should broaden your outlook and see the Universal Father in all created things.

'To bemoan the non-birth of male children and to think that this means the end of the family line is a very crude way of looking at things. Real children are one's good, liberal, and holy thoughts—also, good deeds. These last for ever; there is no death for them. Our Master had once told the Holy Mother: "Don't you see that you have millions of children?" In other words, the Master's immortal thoughts were to find expression in millions of people. Those sacred thoughts are children in the proper sense of the term. A son (*putra*) saves one only from that hell, which is known as "*put*" (whence the term "*putra*"), but our good thoughts save us from all perdition.'

Allahabad Math, December 12, 1931

A couple of monks were sitting at Vijnananandaji's feet. He was telling them about the ideals of monasticism and the need to stake all for the attainment of God.

'He is the real monk', said he, 'who can discard the whole bundle of his past impressions and surrender himself completely to God and the Mother. All desires and ambitions should be surrendered at the feet of God. "I want the Mother and nothing else" should be your motto. A Marwari wanted to make a donation of some money to the Master, at which he got very much annoyed and said: "The fellow wants to take me away from the Mother."

'A learned scholar came to the Master and prayed for illumination, to which his reply was: "The Mother knows everything. I am nobody." His own ego was completely merged in the Mother. Apart from the Mother, he had no separate existence.

'One who can detach his mind from material things will see the light of God and His presence in everything. Worldly attachments draw people away from God and scorch them in the wildfire of the world. The Master was all the time immersed in thoughts of the Universal Mother, and therefore, worldly sufferings had no effect on him. He often used to regret that he could not share with others the sublime and ineffable joy that he derived from constant communion with God—the joy that suffused his entire being and kept him floating on an ocean of divine ecstasy. He was always eager to impart this joy to others. Compared to that heavenly delight, all these worldly occupations, even the studies, are as worthless as dust. He would always see only the light of Brahman, while we see only material things.'

A lecture delivered by one of the monks at an international religious conference held at Allahabad, on the 'Message of the Ramakrishna Order' was read to Swami Vijnananandaji, shortly before evening. He remarked in this connection: 'Yes, it was a good speech, but two very important things have been left out, namely, the power of God's name and the greatness of charity. In the Kalikāla (iron-age), the chanting of God's name is the most important thing—the name of Brahman (Tārakabrahma-nāma), the name of Hari, the name of the Mother—our Master, also, said that. Your thoughts at the time of death will determine your destination after death. There is a story that, on the eve of a pious Christian's death, heavenly angels placed before him a picture of Jesus Christ; but, at the inspiration of Satan, he turned to the other side and looked at the picture of his sweetheart. The result was that he went to hell; it was the effect of surrendering to the allurements of Satan.'

After keeping silent for a short while, he went on speaking, as if to himself: 'The Lord is within you and you don't have to seek Him outside. ... The function of the heart is love and devotion, and that of the head is to discriminate between the good and bad. This love and this discrimination have to be combined for the purpose of God-realization. The Kuṇḍalinī or life-giving energy, which lies coiled up at the bottom of the spine, has to be activated into moving up once or twice to the brain. One who succeeds in doing th conquers Time, and thus knows the pas present, and future. He triumphs over dea and becomes one with eternal Time. Co quering Kāla (Time), Śiva has become th Mahākāla (the Lord of Time). The Divi Mother dances upon His breast. And wh does the Mahākāla do? As if swallowi the whole universe, He lies merged i Brahman.'

GOD—KIND OR CRUEL?

[EDITORIAL]

All scriptures, all religions, all saints, and all savants say with one voice that God is Goodness, Bliss, and Truth and that there is not the least taint of imperfection in Him. Numerous hymns and songs are there gloriously extolling His merciful nature, and ardent prayers for descent of this divine mercy have been uttered throughout the ages in all parts of the world, and are being uttered even today. Not only the individuals, but the communities and nations, too, do so. In times of war or national catastrophes, worships and rituals are performed officially and communally and mass prayers are held in churches, temples, and mosques to propitiate the Divine Power to bestow Its grace for perpetuation of peace and plenty and amelioration of misery and want. There is an innate faith in man that God, who is the final Disposer of all events—good or bad—is kind, and this kindness has the power to rescue man from impending misery or encircling gloom. There are numerous instances, specially in the lives of devotees and pious men, when God's mercy has been so clearly manifest that there cannot be any doubt about its presence and power. In our day-to-day life, also, many of us feel the consoling touch and witness the vivid expression of His love and concern for H creatures.

But, at the same time, the existence sorrow and suffering in this world is a ha and undeniable fact and we see that, fro the earliest times, one poignant question cropping up again and again not only in th common minds, but also in minds that fairly cultured and have the understandi of things. They seem to ask: Why shou there, at all, be misery, evil, and pain in th world which is created by God who is said be all kindness, all justice, and all merc Why this imperfect creation by a perfe God? This question never ceases to agita the minds of men and women. It may that some closed or grosser minds are troubled by such problems. The clos minds are ignorant of the existence of G and the problem in this form cannot, the fore, arise in them. The grosser mind, is not bothered with such questions, if it its group gets the requirements and co veniences of life. Its needs are limited to th plane of gross matter and further investig tion or interest is of no use to it. Thou no life, however gross or mundane, can e be completely free from happiness and mise pleasure and pain, gain and loss, plenty a poverty, there are many who do not bother themselves with philosophical or altruistic problems connected with them. For them, the emergency of the present is so compelling that they are not guided by principles or questions of a theoretical character, and feel satisfied if the ordinary needs for self-preservation, which in most cases pertains to the sustenance of the body alone, are fulfilled. But even such people are sometimes, specially in moments of tribulation, defeat, and despair, driven to think and ponder over the unsatisfactory nature of their existence and allude its cause to some mysterious power which they, of course, cannot clearly conceive of. The fact remains a fact whether we recognize it or not; and the problem of evil, of misery, of sorrow, and of injustice in this created world is always there. We find that even the greatest minds have been exercised by this almost insoluble problem of obvious imperfections and inequities in the creation of a perfect and impartial Creator.

II

Not being able to find any satisfactory answer to such questions, some have tried to solve the problem by cutting at the very root of the question itself. They have denied the existence of God altogether. If there is no God, the question of His being kind or cruel does not arise at all, and the happiness or misery of the world need not be connected with Him in any way. These people seem to say that joy and sorrow, gain and loss, fortune and misery are only actions and reactions of physical laws and also come as accidents, where causes cannot always be alluded to the effects. Such people have always been there. In Europe, we have the Nihilists and the agnostics. In India, also, which is traditionally a land of religion and philosophy, and where belief in God is almost natural, there have been and are people and schools of thought denying the existence of God. The Cārvaka, the Lokāyatika, and other schools of thought and such learned men as Pūrṇa Kaśyapa, Ajīta Kesakambali, and Mankhali Gosāla, and many others have been mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* and other ancient books as preachers of nihilistic philosophy of life and creation. Referring to such persons, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in the *Gītā*, says that there are men who say that the universe is without a God, without truth, without any moral basis, and is brought about by mutual action and reaction of physical laws alone. Like the modern materialists, they also have denied altogether the existence of any God whatsoever as conceived by saints, philosophers, and scriptures.

But this method of solving the problem is like denying the existence of light by the blind, because he cannot see it. The crudest and, perhaps, the easiest way of dismissing a problem is to say that the very hypothesis of the problem is wrong. Such surface rationalists, unable to understand the implications of the questions and impatient to pursue it to a reasonable degree, ignore the necessity of finding answer to the question, calling it absurd. Without taking into consideration the case of such people, we would do well to look at the problem from another angle. We see that the doubt about the mercifulness of God has, sometimes, clouded the conscience of even the believing souls. We read in the *Mahābhārata* that Princess Draupadī, the great devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was unable to explain the cause of the mountain of misery that fell on the pious Pāṇḍavas and on herself, though Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself had befriended them. It seems, for a moment, her faith in a beneficent and just Creator of the universe and in the goodness of righteousness was badly shaken. She bluntly says: 'It seems to me that God controls all the worlds at His own sweet will and dispenses pain and pleasure, happiness and misery as He thinks fit. ... Men are controlled by God like the falcon tied to a string or like the bull by a rope through its nose. ... The *ṛṣis* who are supposed to know the reality of things speak in one way, but things happen contrary to their teachings, like the tumultuous blasts of wind which have no definite direction. ... The Creator does not behave like a father or a mother towards His creatures. He behaves like a low-born person as if in anger. Seeing noble men of character deprived of their wealth and property and means of earning a decent livelihood, and seeing ignoble men happy, I am, indeed, in great anguish of mind.' Kuntī, the noble mother of the gentle and law-abiding Pāṇḍavas, also, felt similarly. When she painfully witnessed the unjust and cruel exile of her dear children, she cried out: 'A mother should give birth only to lucky children and not brave and intelligent sons. For look at my children, who are brave and well-educated, come to this pass!' Bhīṣma, that wise and sagacious grand old man, too, unable to unravel the mystery of God's strange ways, said to Śrī Kṛṣṇa: 'O Kṛṣṇa, I am unable to understand the ways of your Māyā. For the Pāṇḍavas are the wisest, bravest, and best among men, and they have you as their friend, philosopher, and guide, and yet there is no end to their trials and sufferings.'

The story of Hariścandra, who had to suffer the loss of his kingdom, of his wife, of his only son, and ultimately, of his independence by selling himself into slavery to a scavenger, brings into bold relief the inscrutable, but apparently cruel, ways of destiny. His pious wife Śaivyā, also, doubted the existence of a merciful God. That piety incarnate—Sītā, the divine consort of Rāma—was the very example of suffering itself, and unable to bear the pain and prick of it all and satisfy herself as to the goodness of Divine Will, wished, at last, to enter the womb of Mother Earth for peace and rest.

The Bible tells us of Job, 'perfect and upright', who 'feared God and eschewed evil'. He had so much of the good things of this world that 'this man was the greatest of all the men of the East', and God said of him, 'There is none like my servant Job'. Now, Satan refutes this statement of God and puts, with God's permission, the faith of Job to test. In no time, Job loses all his worldly goods, and then, his sons and daughters are killed. Still his faith is not shaken in God and His goodness, for Job says: 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!' But Satan, exasperated at this, again begins his work. He smites Job 'with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown'. Now, even his wife taunts Job for his belief in a kind and merciful God. She says: 'Curse God and die.' But Job's faith is not shaken even at this. He says, 'Foolish woman, shall we receive good at the hands of God and shall we not receive evil?' But such a Job, too, at last loses his confidence in the justice and goodness of God, though he maintains his faith in His existence. In his own person now he sees that he has not done anything to deserve such a lot. In the moment of his bitterness, he asks God: 'Is it good unto Thee that Thou shouldst oppress, that Thou shouldst despise the work of thy own hands and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?'

Such cries of anguish must have risen, time and again, from the throats of bereaved mothers when their only sons have died before their very eyes; from the hearts of the faultless devoted wives when they have lost their loving husbands; from the minds of the broken people when their near and dear ones have been lost to them for no fault of theirs. The innocent sufferers of appalling earthquakes, devastating floods, ravaging famines and other natural catastrophes must have raised their eyes to the heavens and tried to find out the cause of their miseries. The God-fearing lamas of Tibet and the poor Monpas of NEFA must have cried aloud to God to let them know why their peaceful life was so rudely shocked and why their hearths and homes so brutally destroyed. Similar cries are rising every day from the depths of the agonized human souls all over the world. The faith in a just God is put to severe test every now and then and a painfully big, unanswered question mark persists before the suffering people.

Now, can religion, theology, or philosophy offer any solution to this knotty problem, give us consolation in our miseries and sufferings, and reinstate our faith in a just and merciful God?

III

Abstruse intellectual arguments apart, it is, perhaps, the better part of wisdom to admit that in the realm of space, time, and causation, no answer to the dark and vexed problem of human suffering and the presence of evil and injustice on this earth can be satisfying to the hearts of troubled men and women, unless the grace of God descends on them as it did on Yudhiṣṭhira, when he said to Draupadī: 'O Draupadī, in your distress, you have lost the balance of mind and so you talk like this. ... In your ignorance, O Draupadī, don't reproach God the Creator, Sustainer, and Destroyer of the universe. Pray to Him, bow down to Him in all contrition and humility, so that you may be illumined. Never blaspheme the Lord through whose grace the mortal becomes immortal.' Thomas Carlyle, also, once said: 'In this God's world, with its wild, whirling eddies, and its mad foams of oceans, where men and nations perish as without law, and judgement for an unjust thing is sternly delayed, dost thou think that there is therefore no justice? That is what the fool hath said in his heart. I tell thee again, there is nothing else but justice. One strong thing I find here below: the just thing, the true thing.'

One theory says that the justice of God may not always be discernible, but it is there. As Swami Vivekananda has said: 'The mercy of God is eternal and unchangeable; it is we that make the differentiation.' We suffer or enjoy for our *karmas* done in ignorance and in a state of attachment.

There is another way of solving the problem. Some say that good and evil, mirth and misery, joy and sorrow are all relative experiences and change with the subjective conditions of the witness. And, also, what we call evil or suffering are really good and necessary for our spiritual or moral, nay, even material progress. All this is the sport of the Divine. They see good in everything, though such a vision is not for the common people.

All religions speak of the necessity of giving up attachments to the things of the world. The Hindus say that suffering will cease only when we are aware of our real nature, which, according to the Vedānta, comes when the unity of Brahman is realized and one attains a state transcending all dualities of pain and pleasure, loss and gain, good and evil. The Buddhists say that misery ends when our desires are completely annihilated and one attains the state of Nirvāṇa. The Christians and Mohammedans say that, unless we make ourselves one with the will of God, our miseries will not come to an end. The common feature of these solutions is that, unless we go beyond ignorance and be one with the Infinite, by whatever name we call It, there will be no safety, no security from suffering. Swami Vivekananda says: 'Is there no way, no hope? That we are all miserable, that this world is really a prison, that even our so-called trailing beauty is but a prison-house, and that even our intellects and minds are a prison-house have been known for ages upon ages. There has not been a man, there has not been a human soul, who has not felt it some time or other, however he may talk. ... We find that with all this, with this terrible fact before us, in the midst of this sorrow and suffering, even in this world, where life and death are synonymous, even here, there is a voice going through all ages, through all countries, and through every heart: "This my Māyā is divine, made up of qualities, and very difficult to cross. Yet those that come unto Me, I cause them to cross this river of life. ... Come unto Me all that are heavy-laden and I will give you rest." ... This voice comes to men when everything seems to be lost, and hope is flying away, when man's dependence on his own strength has been crushed down, and when everything seems to melt away between his fingers, and life a hopeless ruin.' The Upaniṣadic seer has, also, said the same thing: 'The Knower of the Self crosses the ocean of sorrow. ... Knowing the great, infinite, bodiless Being existing within the perishable bodies, the wise and brave man goes beyond all suffering and sorrow.'

IV

But to those (and most of us are such) to whom such spiritual outlook is denied or whose minds are tormented by doubts of various kinds, we would say that they should keep an open mind and try to seek the truth in all reverence, humility, and earnestness. Whether we ascribe the fact of suffering to the unalterable nature of *māyā* or as a part of divine sport (*līlā*) or to our *karmas* or to ignorance, the fact still remains that we find it difficult to reconcile ourselves to its existence. This will be so in the realm of relative existence. As Swami Vivekananda says: 'The question remains to be answered and it cannot be answered; and philosophy in India was compelled to admit this.'

Once Sir James Jeans, the great scientist, was asked by his friend, J. W. Sullivan: 'Do you think that the existence of suffering presents an obstacle to belief in a universal scheme?' The scientist answered: 'No, I think it possible that suffering can be accounted for along the usual ethical lines. That is to say, evil may be necessary for manifestation of greater good, just as danger is necessary for the manifestation of courage.' 'But does not suffering, in many cases, seem to be entirely pointless—to lead to no good that we can see?' asked his friend. 'I agree that we cannot understand the scheme of life—if there is one', said the scientist. 'At present, we hardly understand anything. I hold very strongly that our present knowledge, in comparison with what man's knowledge may become, is merely infantile. In fact, on all these questions my philosophy could be summarized by the unpopular phrase "wait and see".'

Here is an account by Pandit Shivanath Sastri, where Sri Ramakrishna's views on the point may be found illuminating. This, we think, also provides the best key, the best solution for the common man to this vexed and knotty problem with which we were unsuccessfully grappling so long. Sastriji says:

> On one occasion, I was present in his (Sri Ramakrishna's) room along with a few others, who, during the saint's temporary absence from the room, began to discuss the reasonableness or otherwise of certain divine attributes. I was getting tired of the discussion when the saint returned. Whilst entering the room, he had caught some words of that discussion and had observed the heated nature of it. He, at once, put a stop to the discussion by saying: 'Stop, stop! What is the good of discussing the reasonableness or otherwise of divine attributes? These things are got by other ways, by prayerfully waiting and thinking. For instance, you say God is good; can you convince me of His goodness by reasoning? Take for instance that mournful incident, the encroachment of the sea on the land that lately took place at Dakhin Sabarpore—the great inundation during a storm. We hear that thousands of men, women and children were carried away and drowned by that flood. How can you prove to me that a good God, a beneficent Deity ordered all that? You will, perhaps, answer by pointing out the attendant good that the flood did; how it carried away filth, fertilized the soil, and so on. But my question is this, Could not a good God do all that without carrying off hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women, and children?' At this point, one of the au-

dience interrupted him by saying, 'Are we then to believe that God was cruel?'

Ramakrishna: 'Thou, fool, who tells you to do that? Join your hands in reverential humility and say, "O God, we are too weak and too incompetent to know Thy nature and Thy doings. Do Thou enlighten our understanding."'

Then, he illustrated the truth by the following parable: 'Take the case of two men travelling by a certain road, who take shelter in a mango grove. It is the season for mangoes. One of them sits with pencil and paper in hand and begins a calculation. He counts the number of mango-trees in the garden, the number of branches in each tree, and the average number of mangoes in each branch. Then he tries to imagine how many cart-loads of mangoes that garden will supply, and then again, taking each cart-load to be worth so many rupees when taken to market, how much money that garden will fetch. When one man is engaged in counting up the probable income from the garden, the other is engaged in plucking the ripe mangoes and eating them. Which of them do you consider the wiser of the two?' 'The second one is certainly wiser,' said the visitor, 'for it is certainly wiser to eat the fruits than counting up on paper the probable income from the garden.'

Then the saint smiled and remarked: 'It is likewise wiser to pray to God and to cultivate communion with Him, than to argue about the reasonableness or otherwise of His attributes. Pray and open your hearts to Him, and the light will come to you.'

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN NEW YORK

(*December 6 to December 24, 1895*)

By Mrs. Marie Louise Burke

[The following article is a chapter of a book now in progress which will deal with Swami Vivekananda's life and work in the West from the summer of 1895 to the autumn of 1900. In writing the proposed book, the author's intention is to give as full an account as possible, utilizing to this end biographical material previously known as well as material and facts discovered by her. As will be seen, the present chapter, which is a first draft, follows this plan. The reproduction of newspaper reports have been made verbatim, even in regard to spellings.]

On Wednesday, November 27, 1895, Swami Vivekananda sailed from Liverpool on the SS. *Britannic*, a passenger ship of the White Star Line. The *Britannic*, of 5,000 tons, was by no means the most modern 'luxury liner' afloat. Built over twenty years before, it had long since been outmoded in design, power, and speed by steamers three times its tonnage, and its comforts were nothing compared to theirs. But the voyage started well. On the second day out, the ship, as was customary, anchored for a few hours off Queenstown, Ireland, to pick up the mails, and it was very likely from there that Swamiji wrote to Mr. Edward T. Sturdy, who had been his host in London: 'So far the journey has been very beautiful.' He had been given a cabin to himself by a friendly purser ('Every Hindu is a Raja, they think, and are very polite', he wrote in connection with this good fortune to Alberta Sturgis, Mrs. Leggett's daughter by her first marriage); he had been promised that the fare, which, as he wrote, had been 'meat, meat, meat', would be varied by the vegetables he preferred; and he found that the weather, though so foggy that the ship was delayed, was calm and cheerful. But after leaving Queenstown, the *Britannic* set forth onto the open seas and headed straightway into rough and stormy waters. From then on the voyage was, as Swamiji put it, the most 'disastrous' he had ever had. The little ship, endlessly tossing and pitching, made slow, laborious headway through the turbulent Atlantic; and for the first time in his life, Swamiji was, as he wrote, 'very badly seasick'—and this for days on end. It was an experience he was long to remember. Several years later, Sister Nivedita, referring to his temporary reluctance to make a second voyage to the West, wrote from India to Miss Josephine MacLeod: 'He dreaded being ill at sea so much.'

On Friday, December 6, at 4.24 a.m., the *Britannic*, at last, crossed the bar of the harbour of New York. The temperature was 6° below freezing and a wind was blowing, but the sky was clear and was growing light when, after the usual long stop at the quarantine station at Ellis Island, the ship was piloted toward the docks of Manhattan. Although the skyline that greeted Swamiji had little resemblance to the skyline of today, its massive buildings, some of which towered to twenty stories, and its great Brooklyn Bridge, the marvel of the age, that stretched hugely across the East River, were nonetheless impressive.

There is no record of who met Swamiji at that cold and early hour, but most probably his disciple, Swami Kripananda,[1] was waiting at the North River dock to greet him, to look after his luggage and to escort him to the lodging house at 228 West 39th Street, where a few days earlier, two large parlour rooms had been rented for his and Kripananda's use. 'My friends had already gaged some rooms . . . where I am living Swamiji was to write to Mr. Sturdy two d later. We do not know whether these thou ful friends were officers of the Vedanta So or others interested in Swamiji's work; in any case, the lodging house was one which Kripananda had lived—in a sm room—from April 19 to July 10 of this year and to which he had returned October. In November he had held cl there—again, in a room smaller than parlours—under the auspices of the Ved Society, and thus the house, familiar no Swamiji's friends, had no doubt seemed them the logical place for him to make headquarters.

The neighbourhood, though dreary, respectable and better by six blocks that in which he had lived the previous se it being six blocks farther north. Yet cannot agree that the house was, as Kr nanda wrote in a letter of December 7 to *Brahmavadin*, 'in the best part of the c Though farther north, it was also far west; and west in New York, partic around 39th Street, could scarcely called 'best'. According to Sister D mata, whose memories of this period first published in *Prabuddha Bharata* 1932, the house was 'one in a long m onous row of dingy boarding hous row, no doubt, of those narrow, high-sto brownstone fronts, each identical with th jammed next to it, which had sprung everywhere in New York during the l half of the nineteenth century, and of w many, in their old or middle age, had converted into uninspired lodging ho Two redeeming features of this house the low rent of its rooms and the handy that it could be reached, as Kripa correctly pointed out, by horsecar and t and also by elevated railway, from all of the city. The house, which stood i middle of the block between Seventh Eighth Avenues, was not far from the B way cable cars, nor, for that matter, from the Sixth Avenue Elevated, whose wooden coaches, drawn by steam locomotive, rumbled into a station at 42nd Street; and on 42nd Street itself ran jangling and clanking a cross-town streetcar.

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[1] A disciple of Swami Vivekananda, Swami Kripananda's premonastic name was Herr Leon Landsberg. A Russian Jew by birth, he was employed on the staff of a prominent New York paper.

The two parlour rooms that Swamiji's friends had engaged were on the first floor, running front to back and opening onto one another, as parlours in those days were wont to do. The front windows, no doubt, tall and narrow, faced north onto the street, and it was they, presumably, that provided most of the light, for the back parlour could have had, at best, only a side window, looking out onto an air well. There was, of course, neither private bath nor kitchen connected with the rooms; they were simply rooms. The lodging house kitchen, shared in common by the roomers, was, as we learn from Sister Devamata's memoirs, on the floor below (the basement or ground floor), and, to judge from the usual arrangement of houses such as this, the bathroom, also shared, was on the floor above, at the far end of the hall. It was to this undistinguished lodging house that Swamiji came on the morning of December 6.

As far as can be determined, the newspapers had not concerned themselves with Swamiji's stay in New York earlier in the year. Cosmopolitan, sophisticated, and churning with people and ideas of all sorts, the city accepted him as he wished to be accepted—without fanfare or blazoning headlines. Nor, in Manhattan, was he the controversial figure that he had been elsewhere in America, giving rise to heady debates that the press delighted in. Yet even in this city that took in its stride so much that was foreign and strange, his arrival on the *Britannic* did not go unremarked. It was, in fact, viewed with amazement by at least one reporter, who hastened to interview this extraordinary Hindu. The result, which was reprinted in part in an early issue of the *Brahmavadin* (January 18, 1896), appeared originally in the *New York World* on Sunday, December 8, 1895, and read in full as follows:

ABOU BEN ADHEM'S IDEAL

Swami Vivekananda, the Yogi,
Comes from Bombay, Preaching
Love for His Fellow-Man.

To find an ascetic of the highest Eastern type clad in a red and flowing Hindoo cloak over unmistakable American trousers is necessarily a surprise. But in other things besides dress is Swami Vivekananda astonishing. In the first place he declares that your religion or any one else's religion is just as good as his own, and if you should happen to be a Christian or Mussulman, Baptist or Brahmin, atheist, agnostic, or Catholic, it will make no difference to him. All that he asks is that you act righteously according to your lights.

The Yogi, with his peculiar notions of dress and worship, arrived Friday on the Britannic. He went to No. 228 West Thirty-ninth street. While in New York, he will lecture upon metaphysics and psychology, and will also disseminate in a general way his ideas on the universal religion which asks no man to take another by the throat, because his creed happens to be different. 'Let me help my fellowman; that is all I seek', he says.

'There are four general types of men', he says, 'the rational, the emotional, the mystical, and the worker'. For them we must have their proper worship. There comes the rational man, who says, "I care not for this form of worship. Give me the philosophical, the rational—that I can appreciate." So, for the rational man is the rational, philosophic worship.

'There comes the worker. He says: "I care not for the worship of the philosopher. Give me work to do for my fellow-men." So, for him is made a worship, as for the mystical and the emotional. In the religion for all these men are the elements of their faith.'

'No', said the Swami, very softly, in answer to a question, 'I do not believe in the occult. If a thing be unreal it is not. What is unreal does not exist. Strange things are natural phenomena. I know them to be matters of science. Then they are not occult to me. I do not believe in occult societies. They do no good, and can never do good.'

In fact, the Swami belongs to no society, cult, or creed. His is a religion which compasses all worship, all classes, all beliefs.

Swami, who is a very dark-featured and good-looking young fellow, explained his creed yesterday in remarkably pure English. One forgot when he spoke that an orthodox choker peered over the Bombay robe which, in turn, scantly concealed the American trousers. One saw instead a winning smile and a pair of deep, lustrous black eyes.

Swami believes in reincarnation. He believes that with the purification of the body the soul rises to a higher condition, and as the purification through matter continues, the spirit rises, until released from further migration and is joined with the universal spirit.

Such a man as the Jew-baiter Ahlwardt, who has just arrived in this country, the Swami cannot understand. 'You say', he said, 'that he comes here to preach hate against his fellow-men. Is he not of wrong mind? Is he allowed to spread this hate? The doctors should examine his brain to find out the wrong.'

The peculiar name of the Yogi signifies, literally, 'the bliss of discrimination'. He is the first Indian Yogi who ever came to this country. He comes from Bombay.

(Why it was that many newspaper reporters conceived and clung to the idea that Swamiji came from Bombay is something one is at a loss to explain, except to say, as he himself may at one time have said, that he had *embarked* at Bombay *en route* America.)

Before starting his work, Swamiji had week end to recover from his days of il at sea and to find his land legs once a We do not know in any detail how he s Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, but we know that, aside from being interviewed the writer of the above article, one of first things he did upon his arrival in York, which he found 'very dirty miserable' after 'the clean and beautiful c of Europe', was to visit several of his fri He called on the recently married Mr. Mrs. Francis Leggett, delivering to t 'birds of paradise' as he called them, pack that Josephine MacLeod, Mrs. Leggett's s had sent in his care from Europe. 'They as usual very kind', he wrote to Miss M Leod on Sunday, December 8, and in same letter, he mentioned others on whom had paid calls. 'Saw Mrs. and Mr. Sal and other friends', he wrote. 'By chance Mrs. Peak [Peake] at Mrs. Guernsey's, yet have no news of Mrs. Rothinb [Roethlisberger].'

Swamiji had evidently not fixed a def date for the start of his New York cla yet he lost little time in plunging into work of this second season, which was t as he knew, the most vital and most de part of his mission in America. 'My p are not settled yet about the work here' had written on Sunday, December 8, t friend—unidentified in the published ve of this letter, but very likely Mrs. Ole who was at that time visiting Chicago have an idea to run to Detroit and Ch meanwhile, and then come back to York. ... If you think after consult with Mrs. Adams and Miss Locke th would be practicable for me to come Chicago for a course of lectures, write to But the following evening, Monday, Dec 9 (before he could have received a reply Chicago), we find him holding a class i rooms of his lodging house, during the c of which the schedule for the remainder of the month was outlined.

This preliminary class, which he very likely had intended to hold whether or not he went thereafter to Detroit and Chicago, was crowded. This we learn from Swami Kripananda, who mentioned it, all too briefly, in a letter probably of December 10 to Mrs. Bull. 'The Swami began his work last evening with a lecture,' he wrote, 'in which he gave a general idea of the various methods of Yoga. He was all *bhakti*. The two rooms were crowded, and the movement promises to assume this year immense proportions. Enclosed I send you the dates of the various Yoga classes.' Unfortunately, Kripananda's list of classes and their dates is lost, but it is evident from other sources that Swamiji took up at once not only the subject of *karma-yoga*, as is suggested in the *Life of Swami Vivekananda* by his Eastern and Western disciples, but also of *rāja-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga*, and *jñāna-yoga*. Possibly, he held classes on the Upaniṣads and the Sāṅkhya philosophy as well. Indeed, from a letter written by Kripananda as early as November 19, we learn something of Swamiji's plans for his coming New York work. 'I expect', he wrote, 'to see the Swami on or about the first of December. In a letter written to Miss Waldo, he gives the subjects of the discourses he proposes to have in his classes. Among other topics are: Prāṇa and its modifications; Mind, its functions and control; the chief Yoga methods, the Upaniṣads etc.' One regrets this offhand 'etc.'; but it is clear, even so, that Swamiji wanted to teach much in a short time; that he wanted, this season, to give all aspects of his message a detailed and complete form. The schedule he set himself was, accordingly, a strenuous one. From Tuesday, December 10, through Monday, December 23, he held classes twice daily, including Sundays, and on Christmas Eve, just before leaving town for the holidays, he held a class on *bhakti-yoga*. (It was not until the first week of January of 1896 that he began his New York series of public lectures.) The morning class, which began at eleven o'clock, was for advanced students—presumably those who had attended his classes of the previous season, and the evening class, beginning at eight, was for beginners.

From the day of his arrival in New York until a few days after his classes had begun, Swamiji and his disciple, Kripananda, lived in the two parlour rooms much as they had in the early part of the year when they had shared rooms in a lodging house on West 33rd Street. On December 10, Kripananda wrote to Mrs. Bull; 'Since the Swami arrived, we had common householding, and I gave my share to defraying the expenses of the victuals.' These victuals were cooked, no doubt, in the community kitchen on the floor below, and it is not unlikely that Swamiji, at least once, did the cooking himself, preparing the spicy and complicated Indian dishes that he liked so well, with Kripananda later washing the many pots and pans that this had involved.

But, shortly, the situation changed. At the preliminary meeting, it had become apparent that both parlour rooms would be needed for the morning and evening classes, and that Kripananda would require a room of his own. Thus, within a few days, he moved to a small room on the top floor of the house, for which he paid two dollars a week. Coincident with Kripananda's move, the task of cooking fell upon Miss Sarah Ellen Waldo, an ardent disciple of Swamiji, who had attended his earlier New York classes and had been with him at Thousand Island Park in the summer of this same year.

It is from Sister Devamata's 'Memories of India and Indians', published in *Prabuddha Bharata* of 1932, that we learn something of the part Miss Waldo played in the daily life at 39th Street. (During this period, Sister Devamata, then Miss Laura Glenn, attended all of Swamiji's classes, but did not become his disciple nor draw close to him. A few years later, however, she took an active part in the work he had left behind in America and became a close friend of Miss Waldo, who told her of the more intimate side of life at 39th Street. Later still, she became a follower of Swami Paramananda and went by the name of Devamata.) As she tells the story, the lodging house kitchen and its utensils were evidently none too clean, and it was, she writes, the day following Swamiji's arrival in New York (actually, it was probably not until after the classes had started) that he said to Miss Waldo: 'The food here seems so unclean, would it be possible for you to cook for me?' Miss Waldo was, of course, delighted. 'She went at once to the landlady', Sister Devamata continues, 'and obtained permission to use the kitchen. Then, from her own store, she gathered cooking utensils and groceries. These she carried with her on the following morning. She lived the far end of Brooklyn. The only means transportation was a jogging horse-car, and it required two hours to reach the Swami's lodging at 38th [39th] Street in New York. Undaunted, every morning found her on her way at eight o'clock or earlier; and at nine or ten at night, she was on her way home again.'

Miss Waldo, a tall, portly woman, then in her fifty-first year, evidently did things with a vigour that swept all before it, and the name 'Haridasi' (Servant of the Lord), which Swamiji had given her, seems to have become her well. '[She] moved about doing everything', Sister Devamata writes. 'Her service was continuous and untiring. She cooked, edited, cleaned, and took dictation, taught and managed, read proof and saw visitors.'

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It was because of Miss Waldo's ability to grasp Swamiji's thought so well that he was to entrust her with the final editing of his lectures and class talks. It was she also whom he felt free to scold. 'One morning the Swami found Miss Waldo in tears', Sister Devamata relates. '"What is the matter, Ellen?" he asked anxiously. "Has anything happened?" "I seem unable to please you", she replied. "Even when others annoy you, you scold me for it." The Swami said quickly: "I do not know those people well enough to scold them. I cannot rebuke them, so I come to you. Whom can I scold if I cannot scold my own?"' Needless to say, Miss Waldo thenceforth no longer felt Swamiji's scoldings to be a cause of sorrow; they were, on the contrary, 'a proof of nearness'.

With the start of the classes, with Kripananda's move to the top floor, and Miss Waldo's daily advent on the first floor and in the kitchen, the 'householding' at 39th Street settled down, so to speak, for the winter. Swamiji, of course, continued to live in one of the parlour rooms—the back one; and in this room he also, no doubt, gave private interviews, studied, wrote letters and articles, edited his class talks, and from time to time throughout the day and night, entered into the fathomless depths of meditation that were his natural habitat.

II

Contrary to the belief generally held by Swamiji's biographers—a belief traceable to a fairly exaggerated report given by Kripananda in his news-letter of December 7 to the *Brahmavadin*, the work of spreading Vedānta had not been particularly successful or widespread during Swamiji's absence in England. Nor had Swamiji expected that it would flourish. 'Do not for a moment think the "Yankees" are practical in religion', he had written to his Madrasi disciple, Alasinga Perumal, in March of 1895. 'In that the Hindu alone is practical, the Yankee in money-making, so that as soon as I depart, the whole thing will disappear. Therefore, I want to have a solid ground under my feet before I depart.' He was well aware that a second season in New York was absolutely essential in order to put his American work on a firm foundation. 'This winter's work in New York was splendid,' he had written on June 26, 1895, to Mary Hale, 'and it may die if I suddenly go over to India, so I am not sure about going to India soon.' By August, he was no longer in any doubt, but certain that he would have to return to America. 'It requires a few months more of work in New York to carry it [the work] to some visible shape', he had written to Mr. Sturdy in that month; 'as such I will have to return to New York early this winter.' But although Swamiji's work had not grown in his absence, it had by no means died out. 'I have planted a seed in this country', he had written in July of 1895 to the Maharaja of Khetri. 'It is already a plant, and I expect it to be a tree very soon.' The plant was very much alive, waiting only for his return to continue its growth into a sturdy, unshakeable tree.

The Vedanta Society, which he had founded in November of 1894, was still intact, and those who had drawn close to him were still eager to serve him. Aside from the two *sannyāsins*, Swami Kripananda and Swami Abhayananda, to whom he had given monastic initiation at Thousand Island Park, there were Miss Ellen Waldo, Miss Mary Phillips, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Goodyear, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Leggett, Miss Josephine MacLeod (who, though at the time in Europe, was ready to give all the support she could), Miss Emma Thursby, and in Cambridge, Mrs. Ole Bull. This is to say nothing of the many people who had attended Swamiji's classes and lectures in the spring of 1895 and who had been waiting for his return. Then, too, he had many close friends and supporters in New York who belonged in a category somewhere between those who worked directly for the Vedānta movement and those who simply attended his classes and lectures. We can be sure that a good majority of all these people flocked to Swamiji's New York classes as soon as he reopened them in December of 1895.

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One source of information regarding Swamiji's *yoga* classes of this season is to be found in an article in the *New York Herald* of January 19, 1896, written by a reporter who had attended one of the classes on *karma-yoga* some time earlier. From his very brief and none too astute description of this class ('Its theme was: "That which ye sow ye reap, whether of good or evil."'), one suspects that he attended it in December, Swamiji having explained the workings of *karma* in one of his early classes. But however that may be, there was included in this article a summary of Swamiji's teachings on the four *yogas,* taken, it would appear, from a written statement. The paragraph in question was subheaded: 'THE DOCTRINE OF THE SWAMI', and read:

> The following is a brief sketch of the Swami's fundamental teachings:
>
> 'Every man must develop according to his own nature, as every science has its methods, so has every religion. Methods of attaining the end of our religion are called *yoga,* and the forms of *yoga* that we teach are adapted to the different natures and temperaments of men. We classify them in the following way, under four heads:
>
> (1) Karma Yoga—The manner in which a man realizes his own divinity through works and duty.
>
> (2) Bhakti Yoga—The realization of a (*sic*) divinity through devotion to and love of a personal God.
>
> (3) Rajah (*sic*) Yoga—The realization of divinity through control of mind.
>
> (4) Gnana Yoga—The realization of a man's own divinity through knowledge.
>
> 'These are all different roads leading to the same centre—God. Indeed, the varieties of religious belief are an advantage, since all faiths are good, so far as they encourage man to religious life. The more sects there are, the more opportunities there are for making successful appeals to the divine instinct in all men.'

Taken together, Swamiji's talks on the four *yogas* covered the most important aspects of spiritual life as they had been known to the sages of India and as he himself knew them. And these, with painstaking care, he adapted to the requirements of the modern mind. When one looks back upon Swamiji's work during this second season in New York (even without considering his public lectures, which do not enter into the present narrative), we find a profound significance; for this season was the one in which he gave his message to the Western world in all its fullness. How his thought had evolved up to this point and how he had arrived at his conclusions, I shall not make any effort to analyse here. Suffice it to say that many streams had entered into the ocean of his mind and had found there a fluid unity. As we know, Swamiji did not think as the average thinker does; his mind flashed with knowledge rather than laboured toward it; yet, on the other hand, he did not work intuitively alone. Where his message was concerned, he gave profound and illumined consideration to its every aspect, facing each problem involved, taking nothing for granted; and there can be little doubt that he had given much deliberate and concentrated thought to the philosophical form his teachings were to take during this crucial second season in New York and to the means of presenting them. Indeed, during the course of this season, in February, he wrote to Alasinga: 'To put the Hindu ideas into English and then make out of dry philosophy, a religion which shall be easy, simple, popular, and at the same time, meet the requirements of the highest minds—is a task only those can understand who have attempted it. The abstract Advaita must become living—poetic—in everyday life; out of hopelessly intricate mythology must come concrete moral forms; and out of bewildering Yogi-ism must come the most scientific and practical psychology—and all must be put in a form so that a child may grasp it. That is my life's work. The Lord only knows how I shall succeed. It is hard work, my boy, hard work!'

Although there are no known records of Swamiji's classes of the previous season, we can assume that, while they were not different in essence from those he was now giving, they were, in a sense, preliminary to them and did not constitute so full and so final a presentation of his teachings. The very fact that he had felt so strongly the need to return to New York would indicate that he had much more to say and to do than he had already said and done; that he had, as he wrote, the urgent need to give *visible*, unassailable shape to his message. It was a message the world had not heard before: Swamiji's teachings were not just an orthodox presentation of the Vedānta and Yoga philosophies put into simple and modern language; he infused these with a new spirit, gave them a new dimension, that made them fully relevant to, and redemptive of, the age to which he spoke—the present age. His enunciation of *karma-yoga*, for example, was not just a series of class lectures on the teachings of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It was, rather, the presentation of a gospel which the world, to a greater and greater extent, would (and must) live by. 'I have discovered', he once said in this connection to Swami Turiyananda, 'a new path for mankind.'

This great mind, so vast in scope, so transcendent in quality—a mind that can be called more divine than human—was facing problems and producing solutions which involved the destiny of mankind for centuries to come. Nor was he in any sense unaware of the immense significance of his thought, his words, and his actions. Like all true prophets, he knew he was a prophet. 'I have a truth to teach, I the child of God', he had written to Alasinga at the close of his work the previous season; and in December of 1895, to Swami Saradananda: 'I have a mission to fulfil.' This mission was to be fulfilled not by his teachings alone; it was to be fulfilled also by his very presence. In *New Discoveries*,[2] as some readers may recall, we saw him lecturing in many cities of America in the winter of 1893 and the spring of 1894, and, as I tried there to point out, this travelling about had a far greater significance than would appear on its surface. He was the prophet going among the people, blessing them, transmitting to them, whether they knew it or not, the inextinguishable fire of his own spirit. That same power worked in him always, and it was working now in the heart of New York City—in his classrooms, on the streets, in the lecture halls, in the parlours of his friends. With this urgency of a mission to be fulfilled, to be finished within the short space of a few weeks, Swamiji opened his second New York season of classes with scarcely a pause for rest.

According to Kripananda's letter of December 7 to the *Brahmavadin*, the two parlour rooms, when used for the classes, could together hold a hundred and fifty people. But this estimate was made before the work had actually started and may have been somewhat optimistic. More likely, they held, at the most, about a hundred and twenty; this, in any case, is the highest figure we have for the class attendance. Writing in retrospect of this period, Miss Waldo was to say that all the classes 'were attended by large numbers to the full capacity of the rooms'; and while this was no doubt true of the classes held later in the season, the attendance at first was generally under a hundred. Yet both rooms, though not full, were needed even during the days just before Christmas. 'In spite of the holiday engagements', Kripananda wrote to Mrs. Bull on December 22, 'people come in great numbers to the classes and always delight in hearing the Swami.' After the first week in January, when Swamiji began giving public lectures, the class attendance grew. 'The classes are constantly increasing', Kripananda wrote on January 14. 'We have now in the average from 70 to 80 people.' And in February, Swamiji wrote to Sturdy: 'The general attendance varies between 70 to 120.' (The date given on the published version of this letter is December 16, 1895—a date which appears to be incorrect. In view of its contents, this letter must have been written around the first week of February, 1896.)

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[2] *Swami Vivekananda in America: New Discoveries*, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta.

But if the attendance at Swamiji's classes was small compared with that at his public lectures, it was, in a sense, selected. 'I could have thousands more at my lectures if I wanted them', he remarked in New York to a friend who had expressed regret that his sublime teachings had no larger following. 'It is the sincere student who will help to make this work a success and not merely the large audiences. If I succeed in my whole life to help one man to reach freedom, I shall feel that my labours have not been in vain, but quite successful.' Again, he was to say during the course of a *bhakti-yoga* class: 'Perhaps only half a dozen men and women will follow me in all my life, but they will be real men and women, pure and sincere, and I do not want a crowd. What can crowds do? The history of the world was made by a few dozen whom you can count on your fingers, and the rest were a rabble.'

Sincerity was the only requirement for regular attendance at Swamiji's classes, and aside from the automatic selection that took place (either one was sincere to start with, shortly became sincere, or dropped away) there were no prerequisites. All kinds of people came, many of whom attended both morning and evening classes, avidly drinking in every word. From Sister Devamata we learn something of these people who came day after day to the house on 39th Street, which, from the outside, looked like any other run-down lodging house, but which had become so vibrant within. (Unfortunately, by the time Sister Devamata set her reminiscences down on paper, the first and second season of Swamiji's New York work had become somewhat confused in her memory. But while this robs them of some of their value as a running narrative, their several parts, when unscrambled, present us with clear, easily placed pictures of Swamiji's life in New York such as one cannot find elsewhere. The following paragraphs, for instance, apply essentially to the second season. She writes:

'It was a heterogeneous gathering at the classes in those shabby lodgings—old and young, rich and poor, wise and foolish; stingy ones who dropped a button in the collection basket, and more generous ones, who gave a dollar bill or even two. We all met day after day and became friends without words or association. Some of us never missed a meeting. We followed the course on *bhakti-yoga* and the course on *jñāna-yoga*. We walked simultaneously along the paths of *rāja-yoga* and *karma-yoga*. We were almost sorry that there were only four *yogas*. We would have liked to have six or eight, that the number of classes might be multiplied ...

'The faithful group that followed the Swami wherever he spoke were as relentless as they were earnest. If he suggested tentatively omitting a class because of a holiday or for some other reason, there was a loud protest always. This one had come to New York specially for the teaching and wished to get all she could; another was leaving town soon and was unwilling to lose a single opportunity of hearing the Swami. They gave him no respite. He taught early and late. Among the most eager were a number of teachers each with a blank book in hand; and the Swami's words were punctuated by the tap of their pencils taking rapid notes. Not a sentence went unrecorded; and I am sure that if, later, anyone had made the circuit of the New York Centres of New Thought, Metaphysics, or Divine Science, they would have heard everywhere Vedānta and Yoga in more or less diluted form.'

Sister Devamata was, perhaps, too close to Swamiji's classes to be able to judge how the gathering might appear to a stranger. Fortunately, we have also the impression of one who visited the class solely to observe it. In an article published in the *New York Herald* of January 19, 1896, the reporter, mentions earlier, who had attended a class on *karma-yoga* wrote of the 'well-dressed audience of intellectual appearance'. He picked out among the group of 'between fifty and a hundred persons' not teachers of various religious sects, avidly taking notes, but 'doctors and lawyers, professional men and society ladies'. And one could surely find scattered here and there the faces of those who have become so well known to us as Swamiji's friends and helpers. One could see, for instance, Miss Waldo, Mr. and Mrs. Leggett, the Goodyears and the Guernseys, Kripananda, Mr. Goodwin (of whom more later), Mary Phillips, Ruth Ellis and Dr. Wight—but not Mrs. Bull, who was unable to come to New York until the second week of February, or Miss MacLeod, who, as has been mentioned, was in Europe.

Some of the faces were of people known not only to us, but to the world at large. There would be Emma Thursby, the famous singer, then just retired, who had sung before kings and been feted on both continents; and there would be Antoinette Sterling, recently come from London, where she had been the most famous ballad singer of the 1880's. One could, no doubt, find the writers, Mary Mapes Dodge and Kate Douglas Wiggin, both of whom took an active interest in Swamiji's work, and Ella Wheeler Wilcox, who, with her husband, found always in his classes 'the same uplifted sense of soul and enlarged vision'. And, perhaps, from time to time one would see the great scientist, Nicola Tesla, who was later to take time off from his continuous work to attend Swamiji's public lectures.

From the same newspaper report mentioned above, we learn that Swamiji, in his ochre-coloured robe, sat between the two parlour rooms; the students, rich and poor, famous and unknown, grouped on either side of him. Some sat, perhaps, on plush or horsehair chairs and sofas, others on straight chairs rented or borrowed for the purpose. (Earlier in the same year, many of Swamiji's students had sat, perforce, on the floor at both his New York and London classes, but this does not seem to have been the case at 39th Street.) But wherever and however Swamiji's listeners sat, they were absorbed not only in his words, but in Swamiji himself. 'He is possessed of a large amount of personal magnetism', the same reporter wrote in the same article, with considerable understatement, and continued, 'One has but to glance at the grave, attentive faces of the men and women who attend his classes to be convinced that it is not the man's subject alone that attracts and holds his disciples.' No, it was also the man himself. It was, indeed, difficult to distinguish Swamiji from his message. Like all great prophets, he *was* his message, the embodiment of it, and almost all who were drawn to the one seem to have been drawn to the other also. 'Following the lecture or instruction,' our reporter continued, 'the Swami held an informal reception, and the magnetism of the man was shown by the eager manner in which those who had been listening to him hastened to shake hands or begged the favour of an introduction.'

At first, some had come to Swamiji simply as to one more religious teacher, taking him in on their rounds of incessant lecture-going. 'We were insatiable knowledge-seekers', Sister Devamata writes of herself and her friends, referring now to the spring of 1895. 'We did not limit ourselves to any one doctrine or scripture. We went to one lecture in the morning, a second one in the afternoon, and sometimes to a third in the evening. Philosophy, metaphysics, astrology, each had its turn. Yet, although we seemed to scatter our interest, our real loyalty belonged to the Swami. We recognized in him a power that no other teacher possessed. It was he alone who was shaping our thought and conviction.'

Soon, Laura Glenn and her friends no longer even seemed to scatter their interest. 'Through the late winter and spring of 1895', she writes (meaning, as the context makes clear, the winter of 1895-96), 'the work ...

gained tremendous momentum and fervour. We divided our interest no longer. It was wholly focussed on the message the Swami had to give. That had become the foundation of our daily living, the stimulus that urged us onward.' And it is little wonder that it was so. Speaking of Swami's power to revolutionize the world, Swami Turiyananda once said: '[He] used to tell us, "Do you think I only lecture? I know I give tangible, living spirituality to them, and they know they receive it". In New York, Swamiji was lecturing to a class. Oh, the tremendous effect of it! K. [Swami Abhedananda] said that, while listening to this lecture, he felt as if some force was drawing the Kuṇḍalinī up, as at the time of meditation.' (The reference here was to a class held in New York in 1900, but in 1895 and 1896 Swamiji's power was no less.)

To be stirred to one's depths was not always a comfortable experience. Even Sister Devamata, who attended all his New York classes through two seasons, felt so shy in his presence that she never came 'in close personal touch with him'. 'There seemed', she wrote, 'to be an intangible barrier.' Some people reacted with more than shyness. In the *Life of Swami Vivekananda,* an unidentified disciple is quoted as having said: 'It would be impossible for me to describe the overwhelming force of Swamiji's presence. He could rivet attention upon himself: and when he spoke in all seriousness and intensity—though it seems well nigh incredible—there were some among his hearers who were literally exhausted. The subtlety of his thought and arguments swept them off their feet. In one case, I know of a man who was forced to rest in bed for three days as the result of a nervous shock received by a discussion with the Swami. His personality was at once awe-inspiring and sublime. He had the faculty of literally annihilating one if he so chose.'

But while Swamiji's personality alarmed some and caused others to take to their beds, it attracted far more, for his extraordinary power was penetrated through and through with a consummate benevolence and simplicity. 'Those who feared to be caught in the current of this great power were but few', Sister Christine wrote; 'the others, by thousands, were drawn with the irresistible force, even as iron filings to a magnet. He had power of attraction so great, that those who came near him, men and women alike, even children fell under the magic spell he cast.' And, one might add, even animals. 'Even my dog—an Irish setter—felt this', Sister Devamata wrote. 'He would stand perfectly still and a quiver would run through his body whenever Swamiji would lay his hand on his head and tell him he was a true *yogin*.'

III

Swamiji's effort in New York this second season did not consist alone in delivering his message but in providing the means by which it would be perpetuated after he had left America. His primary move in this direction was to train a permanent body of workers—a process he had begun the previous season by taking several of his disciples to a summer retreat at Thousand Island Park to finish their training in *yoga* and *bhakti* and *jñāna*. 'Then they will be able to help carry the work on', he had written to Alasinga on May 6 of 1895. But aside from this, it was, he knew, essential for him to establish firmly an organization through which those he had trained could function, and without which, as he had written in March of 1895 to Mrs. Bull, 'nothing could be done'. To this end, he had wanted for some time to give the secular side of his work a definite shape. In the summer of 1895, he had written to Alasinga from Thousand Island Park: 'Here [in America] I have already got a respectable following. Next year I will organize it on a working basis, and then the work will be carried on.' The time was now ripe for this organizing to take place.

For one thing, it was no longer essential, as it had been the previous season, for him t keep the secular aspect of his work in his own hands and out of the hands of those who wanted him to cultivate 'the right sort of New Yorkers' and whose well-meaning help, as he had said, frightened him. He had, by now, convinced his friends and supporters that his own method of work, unconventional, uncompromising, and fearless, would not spell disaster either to himself or to his mission. Even Mrs. Bull no longer counselled him from Cambridge to 'keep society in good humour'. She now simply watched, with bated breath, perhaps, but for the time being in silence, no doubt, wisely concluding that there was no other course advisable. 'I always wish to be of help to his work, however and wherever he determines to direct it himself', she wrote to Kripananda toward the end of December, and added with a mother's resignation, 'He is gaining in experience'.

For another thing, Swamiji's New York following was, by now, so well established that he felt at last free to disentangle himself from 'horrid money affairs' that were always so irksome to him. Although, as one reads in the *Life of Swami Vivekananda,* the financial help promised for this winter by 'a rich Boston lady' was not forthcoming, there were others who were able to contribute—and this too on his own terms. Whereas the previous season he had independently supported his classes by giving public lectures to which he had charged admission, now, a day or two after his return from London, he wrote—probably to Mrs. Bull: 'The public lecture plan I intend to give up entirely, as I find the best thing for me to do is to step entirely out of the money question—either in public lectures or private classes. In the long run it does harm and sets a bad example. . . . My idea is for autonomic, independent groups in different places. Let them work on their own account and do the best they can. As for myself, I do not want to entangle myself in any organization.' Thus, in December of 1895, Swamiji established an executive committee within the New York Vedānta Society, by means of which the Society could come of age, so to speak, and attend to business.

At this point, it may not be amiss to say something of the Society as it had existed prior to this time. Actually, there is not a great deal that can be said, for the early officers of the Society, still untrained and uncomprehending of Swamiji's method of work, had had very little voice in the management of his affairs and have left very little trace behind them. It has, in fact, been generally thought by Swamiji's biographers that the Vedānta Society did not come into existence until the end of February of 1896—a date based on a misleading sentence in one of Kripananda's news-letters to the *Brahmavadin*. But unobtrusive as the Society was in 1895, we can say definitely, on the basis of information that has recently come to light, that it did exist.

Well aware at an early date of the need for organization, Swamiji had founded it in November of 1894, writing at the end of that month to Alasinga: 'I have started one already in New York and the Vice-President will soon write to you.' We can only guess as to who the officers of this Society were—perhaps, Miss Emma Thursby and Miss Sarah Farmer, who had tried to arrange parlour lectures for Swamiji in January of 1895; Miss Mary Phillips and Mrs. Arthur Smith, who had arranged his first New York lectures in the spring of 1894, and possibly, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Goodyear. But whoever they may have been, they were enthusiastic and, for the most part, all too eager to spread Swamiji's teachings into the best houses and among the best people. In one of his more unhappy moods, Kripananda, then Leon Landsberg, wrote in April of 1895 to Mrs. Bull: 'You know how the organization, started with great flourish of trumpets for the propagation of the Swami's teachings, proved a miserable failure. President, Vice-President, Secretary, and all the rat's tail of trustees and committees did not draw one soul into the camp of the holy cause. Then [at the end of January, 1895] the Swami and I went to work.' This was not an altogether fair picture of the situation. Swamiji had been away from New York during most of December, 1894, and more than half of January, 1895. It was on his return at the end of January, before the well-meaning Society had had a chance to function, that he had, to its dismay, moved with Landsberg into a poor and highly unfashionable lodging house on West 33rd Street, where, '*sannyāsin* bold' that he was, he had lived and taught as he wished—free and looking to God alone for help. 'The only "right sort of people" are those whom the Lord sends—that is what I understand in my life's experience', he had written emphatically and with finality to Mrs. Bull. 'They alone can and will help me. As for the rest, Lord bless them in a mass and save me from them. Where is the right kind? And where is the bad? It is all He!! In the tiger and in the lamb, in the saint and in the sinner, all He!!' The Society had had very little opportunity that season to manage Swamiji's affairs.

Yet it did not disband, and once or twice, after Swamiji had left America for England, we hear—if not the voice of the Society itself—the reverberations of its activities, or lack of them. In the fall of 1895, for instance, its officers had managed to offend, indeed, to incense, Swami Abhayananda, a tall, angular, and intense French woman, about fifty years old, who was holding her first classes in her Greenwich Village house in New York after her initiation into *sannyāsa* at Thousand Island Park. She was working very hard, as she was later to write to Mrs. Bull, 'making propaganda, preaching, teaching, talking, writing on Hinduism'; yet her classes were small, consisting of 'about 8 or 9 persons', as Kripananda wrote of one he had attended in October. The Vedānta Society had evidently been of little help in peopling Abhayananda's classes, and on November 22, she wrote an outraged letter to Mrs. Bull, in which she gave free vent to her astonishment at t behaviour of the 'officers of the Society' wh it would appear, had come to her hou almost not at all.

The Society again gave evidence of i existence in November—this time more b its presence than by its absence. At t classes Swami Kripananda was then hold at 228 West 39th Street, it was the Societ Treasurer who took up the collection. 'I ha not made one cent', Kripananda wrote December 9 to Mrs. Bull in reply to her i quiry. 'The small collection that was tak up in the classes were taken by the Treasur Mr. [Walter] Goodyear. He offered m several times assistance, and so did Mr Waldo. But I did not accept anything as had still some means; I paid all the time m own rent, until last week when the two roo were engaged for the Swami and myself.' W need no further evidence to show that t Society existed throughout 1895. An inad quate organization it undoubtedly had bee but if anyone had gained in experience, it w its officers, who were ready at the end of t year to take on at least some responsibility.

It should be mentioned here that while t Vedānta Society had officers from the st and, to judge from Kripananda's lett trustees and at least one committee, it h no formal membership outside of this sm group of officiaries, nor was it to have for several years. It had what one might c sympathizers, but no members in the us sense. This was as Swamiji wanted, for wh he knew that the work of spreading h teachings and, at the same time, of keep them pure and intact required an organi tion, the last thing he wanted was to fo an organized sect or religious body th would savour in any way of exclusiveness tend to crystallize around a set of beliefs. has been more or less taken for granted b Swamiji's biographers that the Vedā Society, at the time of its inception, 'inv members of all religious creeds and organi tions to become its members without cha of faith . . . [who] became known as "Vedāntins"'. This is not in accordance with the facts as they are now known nor with what Swamiji seems to have had in mind. A large organized group of people known as 'Vedāntins' (whatever their real faith) he wanted to avoid for as long as possible. He wanted to keep his message fluid and unconfined, so that it would reach all levels of society, touch all philosophies, and flow through all religions, breaking down the barriers between them. He wanted Vedānta to be a religion that one could, to be sure, follow directly if one wished, but he wanted it also to be a teaching that could find its place in the lives of those who followed any other religion in the world, or of those who followed no religion at all. The initial carrying out of this purpose did not require—indeed, it precluded—the enlistment of an organized following, which, in those early days, could so easily have formed itself into an exclusive sect, and thereby, have nipped the fulfilment of Swamiji's purpose in the bud. It was a danger he was aware of and one which he was careful to guard against. In this connection, he wrote to Alasinga in 1895 (the exact date of the letter is not given in its published version); 'We have no organization, nor want to build any. Each one is quite independent to teach, quite free to preach whatever he or she likes. If you have the spirit within, you will never fail to attract others. The——s' methods can never be ours, for the very simple reason that they are an organized sect, we are not.' (It is implied in the *Life of Swami Vivekananda* that the letter which contains the above passage was written in the autumn of 1895 to an American friend. But whether written to Alasinga, as is said in the *Letters of Swami Vivekananda*, or to someone in America, the passage pertains to Swamiji's policy in the West.) Again and again, he told reporters in America and others who questioned him that he was not founding a new religion or a religious society, but was simply teaching a philosophy. 'Preach the philosophy, the spiritual part, and let people suit it to their own forms', he wrote in May of 1895 in connection with the editorial policy of the *Brahmavadin*, the English language fortnightly that his Madrasi disciples were starting under his direction and which was meant for both Indian and Western readers. And, as will be seen in a later chapter, it is evident from information recently come to light that in 1896, after he had left America, care was taken by those in charge of his work to keep its organizational aspect at a minimum.

Nor did Swamiji feel that a religious organization with a membership was essential for the spread and preservation of his message. 'Neither numbers, nor powers, nor wealth, nor learning, nor eloquence, nor anything else will prevail, but *purity*, *living the life*, in one word, *anubhūti*, realization. Let there be but a dozen such lion-souls in each country, lions who have broken their own bonds, who have touched the Infinite, whose whole soul is gone to Brahman, who care neither for wealth, nor power, nor fame, and these will be *enough* to shake the world', he had written to Sturdy on August 9, 1895. 'As to societies and organizations,' he had added, 'these will come of themselves.'

Only once that we know of did Swamiji himself consider starting a religious organization in the West. We find that, one day in London, his mind swung with the energy characteristic of it toward the idea of having a church and a ritual. It was on a Thursday (October 31, 1895), after an interview in his quarters with two young men, that he wrote with great urgency to Mr. Sturdy: 'Both of them want to know the rituals of my creed! This opened my eyes. The world in general must have some form. In fact, in the ordinary sense, religion is philosophy concretized through rituals and symbols. It is absolutely necessary to form some ritual and have a Church. That is to say, we must fix on some ritual as fast as we can. If you can come Saturday morning or sooner, ... we will fix something grand, from birth to death of a man. A mere loose system of philosophy gets no hold on mankind.' But this idea was soon discarded, and we do not hear of it again. It serves, however, to underscore the fact that Swamiji's basic policy was quite different. Two days later, we find him writing to Sturdy in reply, obviously, to the latter's expressed disapproval of the plan: 'I think you are right; we shall work on our own lines and let things grow.'

In America, also, Swamiji 'let things grow', laying down no rules, giving no preaching directions to his ordained disciples, enlisting no followers, and establishing no society except that which was essential to handle the secular side of his work. Into this minimal Society he naturally infused a power that was to enable it to withstand many a future quake and to succeed even during its early years in variously bringing his message into the lives of hundreds of people. But the establishment of this Society was not, of course, what he meant when he said in a letter written around this time to Swami Brahmananda: 'Now I have laid the foundations firm here ... and nobody has the power to shake them.' It was in the consciousness of the American people as a whole that Swamiji laid the foundation for a spiritual life which would thrive for centuries to come. 'Wherever the seed of his [Sri Ramakrishna's] power will find its way, there it will fructify—be it today or in a hundred years', he had written in October of 1894 to Swami Ramakrishnananda, not referring to societies or organizations, but to less visible, though far more significant, import of his mission. Indeed, if Swamiji can be said to have established a church in America, then it is the church invisible, established in the temple of the American mind, wherein he installed, as it were, the tree of spiritual knowledge and power. He did not doubt that that tree would flourish, and, knowing that he came with a divine mission, we need not doubt it either.

But to return to the organizational asp
of his work, it was not until October of 1
when he was in India, that the New Y
Vedanta Society was incorporated and reg
tered under the laws of the State of N
York, with Mr. Leggett as its president, a
not until the spring of 1900, when Swam
was in California, that the trustees of t
Society opened a membership roll. This
learn from a paragraph in an authoritat
article published in the *Pacific Vedant*
San Francisco, February 1902, and written
a time when the Society's early history w
still fresh in the minds of those who had h
part in it. 'Although the Vedanta Soci
was established in 1894 and incorporated
1898,' this paragraph reads, 'it had
members outside of incorporators who form
themselves into committees to manage t
necessary business connected with the w
As this [the work] continued to make ste
growth, the Trustees opened a membersh
roll in March, 1900.'

It was in reference to the incorporation
the Society in 1898, which had taken pl
without his permission or knowledge, th
Swamiji was to write from San Francisco
April of 1900: 'What do I know about t
Vedanta Society? Did I start it? Had
any hand in it?'—words that have puzz
the careful reader, for, of course, Swamiji h
had a hand in starting the New York Veda
Society several years before. He was
now disowning that Society. 'The only th
I see', he wrote on April 10, 1900, to M
MacLeod, 'is that, in every country, we h
to follow its own method. As such, if I w
you, I would convene a meeting of all t
members and sympathizers and ask th
what they want to do. Whether they w
to organize or not, what sort of organizat
they want if any, etc. But Lordy,' he add
with the knowledge that his work in t
West was finished, 'do it on your own ho
I am quits.' And then—for Swamiji co
never step out if he was needed: 'Only
you think my presence would be of any b

I can come in fifteen days.' But this is going far beyond our present story.

In December of 1895, the establishment of an efficient executive committee within the Vedanta Society was, to Swamiji, a vast relief. 'I have made over all the secular part of the work to a committee and am free from all that botheration', he wrote to Mr. Sturdy on December 23. 'I have no aptitude for organizing. It nearly breaks me to pieces.' There are no available records to indicate who belonged to the Executive Committee, but we can be fairly sure that Mr. Walter Goodyear and Miss Waldo were among its members. (We first come across the former in the spring of 1895, when he was already active in Swamiji's work. In September of the same year, he became the New York agent for the newly started *Brahmavadin.*) Miss Mary Phillips (who appears to have been an officer of the Society in 1896) and Mrs. Arthur Smith were probably also on the Committee, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Leggett. Indeed, the officers of the Society and the members of the committee perhaps at this time overlapped, as was the case later on in the Society's history. (In 1902, there were, as one learns from the *Pacific Vedantist* of February of that year, 'six trustees of the New York Vedanta Society, who form the Executive Committee to manage all business matters'. From this Committee, four Society officers were annually chosen.) There may, however, have been more than six Committee members in 1895 and '96. On December 20, Swami Kripananda wrote to Mrs. Bull of those who were now managing Swamiji's secular affairs as 'mostly to me unknown people who constitute a self-made committee of the Swami's movement'. Who these unknown-to-Kripananda people may have been it is hard to say, for he was acquainted with all those whose names are familiar to us. Many New Yorkers, however, could have become interested in Swamiji's work during the spring of 1895, when Kripananda had decided for various reasons to live apart from his *guru,* and there must, indeed, have been workers whose names have not come down to us. One thing certain, however, is that Kripananda was mistaken when he called the Committee 'self-made'. It had been appointed by Swamiji to serve a definite purpose, namely, to raise funds, to take up collections, to rent halls, to advertise, to print announcements—in short, to handle the business aspect of the classes and lectures—and also, to attend to whatever other business matters might come along. For instance, on January 16, 1896, Swamiji wrote to Mr. Sturdy: 'I have a chance of getting a piece of land in the country ... to serve as a meditation resort. That, of course, requires a committee to look after it in my absence, also, the handling of money and printing and other matters.'

The first accomplishment of the Committee was, in some sense, its most spectacular. On December 12, when it must have been just budding, it inserted the following want ad in both the *Herald* and the *World*:

> Wanted—A rapid shorthand writer to take down lectures for several hours a week. Apply at 228 West 39th Street.

Those three lines were momentous ones. It was they that brought Mr. J. J. Goodwin to Swamiji and made possible the wealth of literature that we have today. He must have come immediately, for the want ad appeared only once—and he was immediately engaged.

According to several reminiscences of Swamiji and according also to Swamiji himself, it was a few of his 'friends' who had engaged Mr. Goodwin. The question may arise as to how we are to know these friends were members of the Committee and had acted, so to speak, officially. One answer is to be found in Swami Kripananda's letter of December 23 to the *Brahmavadin,* in which he wrote: 'A few members have raised a fund for engaging a short-hand-writer in order to take down all of the Swami's lectures.' Again, we find Miss Phillips writing to Mr. Goodwin in October of 1896: 'Did not the New York members first introduce you to the

Vedānta and stand honorably by all their contracts with you without any outside assistance? Would any of the Swami Vivekananda's lectures have been printed to the world today if they had not made it possible by advertising for you to take the stenographic notes of every word, and subscribing your salary among themselves?' Now, the word 'members' in both the above quotations could mean only members of the New York Vedanta Society, and, as has been pointed out, the members of the Society were either the officers of the Society or the members of the Committee or both. There were no other members.

It is said in the *Life of Swami Vivekananda* that prior to Mr. Goodwin's coming, two stenographers had been tried out and, for one reason or another, had been found unequal to the task of recording Swamiji's classes. They may have been tried on the 10th and 11th of December, and one of them may have been Swami Kripananda, who for the past month or so had been working for hours a day to learn shorthand and typing for this very purpose. But proficient as Kripananda may have become in so short a time, he could not, as far as speed was concerned, have become an expert. The second applicant, on the other hand, may have been an expert in technique but wanting in comprehension. What was required was a skilled shorthand writer and typist who was, at the same time, a man of intelligence, education and spiritual understanding. It would not seem likely that such a person, if available at all, would be available for a job that must have offered a salary lower than the prevailing one of 15 to 18 dollars a week. Yet Mr. J. J. Goodwin, who appeared on the scene almost at once, was just such a man. 'I have intense faith in Truth', Swamiji had written earlier in the year. 'The Lord will send help and hands to work with me.' One cannot very well doubt that Goodwin, a handsome Englishman in his late twenties who had recently come to America, was, literally, a Godsend. Not only was he fully qualified for the task of taking down and transcribing Swamiji's class talks and lectures, but was capable, as he soon proved, of handling many other matters in connection with the work.

Certainly, from Mr. Goodwin's point of view, it was by the grace of God that he had found his way to 228 West 39th Street. Although he was a very competent young man, who, aside from having been a court reporter, had had, as we learn from one of his own letters, eleven years of journalistic training and experience in editing three newspapers, he was also, one reads in *Noble Lives* by Nagendranath Gupta, 'on the highroad to become a wastrel'. Swamiji's influence upon him was profound and, evidently, immediate. 'The Swami told him many incidents of his [Goodwin's] past life,' the *Life* relates, 'and this created such a moral revolution in him that thenceforth his whole life was changed.' Thus Swamiji sometimes startled a half-asleep soul into wakefulness. But it was also, perhaps, Swamiji's infinite compassion and understanding that attracted Goodwin. 'He was as simple as a child', we learn from Mr. Gupta, 'and wonderfully responsive to the slightest show of kindness.' Would he not, then, be ready to fall at the feet of one who had no word of condemnation for his past, whatever it may have been, but who offered him unconditional love? Fall at Swamiji's feet is, figuratively, what Mr. Goodwin did. He plunged heart and soul into the Vedānta movement. It is not true, however, as has often been said (in Josephine MacLeod's 'Reminiscences', for instance), that Mr. Goodwin refused to accept a salary. Surely, if it had been possible for him to work without pay, he would have done so. But it was not possible. When, in connection with a difficulty that will be explained in a later chapter, Miss Phillips was to remind him that the members had subscribed his salary among themselves, he replied: 'I am a poor man. For the sake of my part in the Vedānta movement I wish I were not, but I am, and I am not ashamed of it. I simply *had* to take salary for my work in New York.' The salary, however, was no doubt a small one, possibly, barely enough to cover his living expenses. Several months later—in August of of 1896—he wrote to Mrs. Bull: 'If I am to work for the Vedānta—and my wishes are all that way: I think I may say my heart is thoroughly in the work—I am afraid I shall have to accept bare living, but beyond that I would not consent to any arrangement.'

Indeed, from the start, Mr. Goodwin's heart was thoroughly in the work. 'He would work day and night over the lectures,' the *Life* tells us, 'taking them down stenographically and then type-writing them, all in the same day.' Even if he took down only the advanced morning class, this was in itself a feat, for, as Kripañanda wrote in reference to Swamiji's *karma-yoga* class: 'These lectures are very long if taken down verbatim.' To keep pace with Swamiji was to have little time to spare, and if there had been an unoccupied room in the same lodging house, Goodwin most probably would have taken it. As it was, he took a room almost directly across the street at 247 West 39th, and it was undoubtedly there that he did his typing, going from the morning class to his typewriter and back again to the evening class, or first, perhaps, to dinner at Swamiji's table.

According to a letter Kripananda wrote to Mrs. Bull on December 20, the Executive Committee was, by that time, functioning in full force. 'They dispose of everything,' he wrote, 'even the money which comes in as contributions in the classes.' This was, of course, as Swamiji wished. Out of the collection money and donations, the Committee met the expenses of the work. It was because of this arrangement that Swamiji was able to give his lectures and class talks entirely free of charge and, at the same time, give experience to those who were to manage things in his absence. 'There will be enough men to carry on the work here after this winter, if the Lord is kind', he had written to the Maharaja of Khetri in July of 1895, and he was now training them.

Aside from handling the financial matters of the Society, the Committee also made resolutions, as we learn from one of Kripananda's letters. 'I do not think the Swami will come to Boston', he wrote on December 26. 'The Committee resolved that he should not start his intended tour to Detroit or Chicago before the close of his work in New York which will be in April.' Things did not work out quite as the Committee resolved, but it is interesting to notice that it was *making* resolutions at this time, even if it did not, or could not, keep them.

IV

We owe to Mr. Goodwin, it is true, the preservation of the greater part of Swamiji's teachings of this period, but some of them have come down to us in full and authoritative form without his help. Among these are parts, at least, of *Bhakti Yoga,* which was first published in eight consecutive instalments (from February 29 through June 20, 1896) in the *Brahmavadin.* While some of these articles on *bhakti-yoga* consisted of Swamiji's adaptations of his class talks, others were written essays, and among these last were the first two instalments—'Definition of Bhakti' and 'The Philosophy of Īśvara'. It was in December of 1895 that Swamiji started writing these two articles, and before Christmas that he finished them. Nor was it Goodwin who made the typed copies; rather, it was Swami Kripananda who, working far into the night, pounded them out, among other things, on a Smith Premier, which, with the help of Mrs. Bull, he had rented for five dollars a month and which, as he assured her, 'I understand to handle'.

'I am translating Deussen for the Swami and writing for the *Brahmavadin,* and typewriting the Swami's articles for the same paper', Kripananda wrote to Mrs. Bull on December 29, and continued (the errors are his), 'I shall send you a copy of the Swamis first instalments of his article on Bhakty Yoga which he sent to India.' The instalment Kripananda was at that time typing was, most probably, the second; but the third, which, unlike the first two, was an adaptation from a class talk, was also completed, in substance, before Christmas, it having been the *bhakti* class talk that Swamiji gave on December 24, just before he left New York for the holidays.

Our precise knowledge as to the date of this particular class we owe to a reporter from the *New York Herald*, who attended it and who wrote of it in an article that appeared, almost four weeks later, on Sunday, January 19, 1896. (There were two articles about Swamiji in the *Herald* on this date.) It read in part as follows:

LESSONS IN THE BHAKTI YOGA

Swami Vivekananda's Ideas on the Qualifications of a Religious Teacher.

THE RELIGION OF THE HINDU

Men Cannot Get It Until Their Natures Are Ready to Receive the Inspiration.

> It was in Swami Vivekananda's Bhakti class rooms, the day before Christmas, that the following sentiments were uttered. The subject was:—'The qualifications necessary both in teacher and disciple in order to attain Bhakti,' an intense love of God.
>
> For those who had come for the first time to the Swami's class, and did not know his liberal views in religious matters, a great surprise was in store. They had come to hear a Hindu monk, a benighted heathen, and if it had not been for his Oriental features and the broadness and catholicity of his utterances he might have been taken for a Christian clergyman.

This combined praise of Swamiji and jab at Christian clergymen was followed by a number of long passages from Swamiji's class that can be found in the third (March 2 1896) instalment of his *Brahmavadin* articles. Since these passages can also be found today in the fourth and fifth chapters of *Bhakti Yoga*, entitled, respectively, 'The Need of a Guru' and 'Qualifications of the Aspirant and the Teacher', they need not be quoted here.

It is interesting to notice, however, that these two chapters of *Bhakti Yoga*, together with the one that precedes them, entitled 'Spiritual Realization, the Aim of Bhakti Yoga,' can be found in almost identical form in the undated *Addresses on Bhakti Yoga*, published in Volume IV of the *Complete Works*. It would seem that these 'Addresses' are in part, if not wholly, the transcripts of Swamiji's New York *bhakti* classes. Indeed, the newspaper quotations from Swamiji's class of December 24 parallel certain passages in the 'Addresses' even more exactly than they do those in *Bhakti Yoga*. I myself would hazard the guess that these 'Addresses' are wholly composed of the New York *bhakti* classes and that one can learn from them, as one cannot learn so well from the edited book *Bhakti Yoga*, what Swamiji actually said to the people who came that winter, wearing everything from furs and muffs to threadbare coats, to 228 West 39th Street.

In the 'Addresses', one can sense the immediacy of the classrooms. One can see Swamiji scolding those who, like Laura Glenn and her friends, made a 'hotchpotch of the brain', or those who sought here and there for strange occult thrills that 'demoralize the soul and [result in] a hopeless muddle,' or, again, those who thought of religion as a sort of congregational 'knee drill'. One can catch both the sweetness and the fire with which he again and again explained the true meaning of religion, diverting the course of his listeners' thoughts out of bogs and sloughs into the free-flowing channels that led to God. He never talked down to his students, yet, at the same time, he never confounded them with the Sanskritic scholarship that he had at his immediate command and that he naturally made greater use of in his written articles.

But this is not the place to discuss Swamiji's method of teaching nor to compare *Bhakti Yoga* with the *Addresses on Bhakti*. Rather, the point to be noticed here is that Swamiji, while holding two classes daily, finished *writing* the first two chapters of *Bhakti Yoga* before Christmas.

Those December days were full ones. 'The Swami works very hard,' Kripananda wrote on December 20, 'lecturing twice a day, and then spending the rest of the time in hard study over the Sanskrit books [for which he had sent to India and London], not allowing himself half an hour a day for going outdoors. He eats very little—vegetable food. I am affraid (*sic*) he will make himself sick.' Certainly, anyone else would have made himself sick—would, in fact, as Swamiji himself said, have died. 'You must always remember how much work I have to do', he wrote on December 20 to his Madrasi disciples, by way of spurring them on. 'Sometimes I have to deliver two or three lectures a day—and thus I make my way against all odds—hard work; any weaker man would die.' Nor did Swamiji sleep well at night. 'I have not slept even one night soundly in New York since I came,' he wrote to Mrs. Bull on February 6, in a heretofore unpublished letter that will be given in full in a subsequent chapter, 'and this year there is increased work both with the pen and the mouth.'

(That Swamiji sometimes gave three classes a day during this period, as he mentioned above, is not surprising. Often, in America, he would hold classes in the homes of his friends, in addition to those in his own rooms. At the present writing, however, there is no available record of his extra classes in December of 1895.)

It was during these intense two weeks of December that Swamiji, his mind aflame with his message, also started translating the *Yoga-Sūtra* of Patañjali and dictating his commentaries on them. (His biographers have given June of 1895 as the time when he wrote *Raja Yoga*, of which the Yoga Sūtras are a part. Yet, as will be seen, there is evidence to indicate that this is not correct.) 'I have now taken up the Yoga Sūtras', he wrote to Sturdy on December 23, 'and take them up one by one and go through all the commentators along with them. Those are all taken down, and when completed, will form the completest annotated translation of Patañjali in English. Of course, it will be rather a big work.' At first Swamiji seems to have followed this plan. 'The words dropped in my last letter were "Yoga Sūtras" which I am translating, with notes from various authorities', he wrote again to Sturdy on January 16, 1896. 'I want to incorporate the chapter in *Kūrma-Purāṇa* in my notes.' But as it turned out, the big and technical work he had contemplated was not written. Instead, he brought the commentaries upon the Sūtras from deep within his own being. As is well known, his 'Yoga Aphorisms' consist, as he wrote in the Preface to *Raja Yoga*, of 'a rather free translation of the aphorisms (Sūtras) of Patañjali, with a running commentary'. 'Effort', he continued, 'has been made to avoid technicalities as far as possible, and to keep to the free and easy style of conversation.' It was Swamiji's genius to put profound and difficult philosophy into the most simple of terms, for he lived always on the plane where the greatest truths were as clear as—or, rather, clearer than—daylight; nothing was to him shrouded in mystery, nothing complex. And this simplicity and clarity he was able to communicate.

It was Miss Waldo who took down Swamiji's commentaries on the *Yoga-Sūtra*, sitting with him in the back parlour on quiet afternoons. 'Those cherished hours of work on it were specially happy ones for her', Sister Devamata writes. 'She often spoke of them. Each day when the Swami's meal had been prepared and her tasks in the kitchen were done, she would come up to the back parlour where Swamiji lodged; take her seat at table, on which stood an open ink-well; and dip her pen in the ink.' Miss Waldo's own account of those sessions have often been quoted, but it will, I think, bear repeating here: 'It was inspiring to see the Swami as he dictated to me the contents of the work', she wrote. 'In delivering his commentaries on the Sūtras, he would leave me waiting while he entered deep states of meditation or self-contemplation, to emerge therefrom with some luminous interpretation. I had always to keep the pen dipped in the ink. He might be absorbed for long periods of time and then suddenly his silence would be broken by some eager expression or some long deliberate teaching.'

In the meanwhile, Swamiji's daily classes were not only revolutionizing the minds of those who attended them, but were providing material for the books that he was to speak of as the 'text-books which will be the basis of work when I am gone', and that were to spread his message throughout the world. Although the story of the printing and publication of his books does not fall within the scope of this chapter, one can, perhaps, anticipate a little at this point, since three of these books contain the *yoga* class talks that were begun in December of 1895. The *karma-yoga* class talks, which were the first to be completed, were also the first to appear in book form, coming out in New York in February of 1896 under the title of *Karma Yoga*. The next book to be published was *Raja Yoga*, which, after a considerable amount of difficulty between Swamiji's American and English disciples, appeared in England in July of 1896. The third book, *Bhakti Yoga*, which, as has been seen, was first published in the *Brahmavadin* and which contains both articles and adapted class transcriptions, was first printed as a book in Madras in the autumn of 1896.

One learns from Swamiji's letter of this period that he intended to bring out his *jñāna yoga* class talks in book form; yet, for reasons that are not entirely clear, this was never done. 'The New York lectures on *jñāna-* have never been published,' Miss W wrote in her 'Reminiscenses', 'although t are among the finest Swami ever gave. T in book form that bear the name *jñāna-* were delivered in England and India [actu England and America].' It is possible t the transcripts of the *jñāna-yoga* class ta which at one time existed, have been l It is also possible, however, that they not lost at all, but have been published the partly identified *Discourses on Jñ Yoga*, which first appeared in nine ins ments in *Prabuddha Bharata*, beginning the issue of January 1930, and later under same title in Volume VIII of the *Comp Works*. These 'Discourses', as is explai in the editor's note, 'were originally recor by ... Miss S. E. Waldo; Swami Sara nanda, while he was in America, copied th out from her notebook'. Although there no definite proof that the 'Discourses' indeed, the notes of Swamiji's 1895-96 *jñ yoga* classes, they seem almost certainly to so. 'I have the *gnana* notes all put in cons utive form', Miss Waldo wrote to Mrs. B on May 19, 1896, referring to the class n of 1895-96, 'and the Swami took a copy them to Eng. saying he might publish th with the lessons of this year [that is, London class lessons], as an introduct I hardly expect that he will, however. I know the *Gnana* this year, was rather a c tinuation of the lessons of last year lacked a beginning, as it were. Prob Mr. Sturdy will furnish one.' From t passage, we can infer that no *jñāna-yoga* notes of the previous season existed. outside of his New York classes, Swamiji no other *jñāna-yoga* class of this length. notes of which Miss Waldo would be li to have in her possession. Thus one can I think, that, whether the 'Discourses' Miss Waldo's own notes or edited version Goodwin's transcripts or a little of both, are almost certainly notes of the *jñāna-* class talks of 1895-96. If so, then, we today in published form large parts at least of all four of Swamiji's *yoga* classes given at a time when his message was at its fullest flowering.

From the ninth of December to the day before Christmas, Swamiji had worked without rest. Into those two weeks he had crammed a full season's activity. He had held at least thirty classes, had dictated part of his translation of and commentary on the *Yoga-Sūtra* of Patañjali, had written two chapters of *Bhakti Yoga,* had directed, as always, the Indian work through his letters to his brother monks and his disciples, and had organized an executive committee to handle the secular aspect of his work in New York. In addition, he had, no doubt, given many private interviews, refusing none who came to him for help, guidance, and instruction.

Despite the fact that his students, as Sister Devamata writes, wanted to give him no holiday, these two weeks of unremitting work and sleepless nights made a Christmas vacation imperative. Indeed, Swamiji was longing around this time to 'bury' himself in a remote Himalayan cave, there to plunge into the furthest depths of meditation. 'Narendra belongs ... to the realm of the Absolute', his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, had said of him. And throughout his life, the longing for the Absolute was intense and unremitting. From time to time, he expressed it in a cry of anguish or in a resolve to withdraw entirely from the world, a plan that he must have known could not be kept until the towering structure of his mission was built and his work on earth done. One such plan he communicated to Swami Kripananda, who, taking it seriously (for who could not take Swamiji's moods seriously?), wrote on December 26 to Mrs. Bull: 'In May he will sail to England, to go from there to India where he intends burying himself in a cave for several years. Thus it is the last season we shall have the blessing of having him in our midst.'

Swamiji was never to know, outwardly, the peace of a Himalayan cave. But, at least, there was a respite from work during the Christmas holidays of 1895. As early as December 8, his good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Leggett, with whom he had visited Paris earlier in the year, had invited him to spend the holidays with them at their country home in Ulster County, New York. 'Going with the birds of paradise to Ridgely this Christmas', he had written to Josephine MacLeod. Thus he closed his New York classes on the morning of Christmas Eve with a *bhakti-yoga* class and left for the country. But before doing so, he wrote a short greeting to Mrs. Bull:

> 228 W. 39
> New York the 24th Dec. '95
>
> Merry Christmas and happy New Year to you Dear Mrs. Bull. And may peace and health rest on you and yours for ever. I am going out of town today and will be back in ten days.
>
> My love to all
>
> Yours affly,
> Vivekananda

PAUL TILLICH'S PHILOSOPHY OF BEING

BY DR. B. V. KISHAN

Paul Tillich is, undoubtedly, one of the profound thinkers of the present day. His thought seems to be equally influential in the two distinct realms of philosophy and theology. His wide scholarship, coupled with the deep understanding of the problems which have beset human progress, brings a message of vigour and hope into the conflicting and complex arena of human thought. His writings have influenced current thought and they are based on grounds which are philosophically justifiable and theologically important. He is regarded primarily as a theologian, but the philosophical elements of his thought, so far as they have been worked out, bring forth and establish him as a philosopher. The understanding of this dual aspect of Paul Tillich's writings is not always easy; it is really a painstaking job. In any such attempt it is always possible that some one or other aspect of his thought is either unjustifiably magnified or pushed into the background, unvalued.

Tillich explains and analyses modern culture and the present situation while relating them to his thought and religious principle. The present situation shares the heritage of the past. The elements that had stood the test of time and survived the onslaught of many centuries of adverse circumstances, those that had been embedded in the religious and spiritual traditions of the ancient Hebrew prophets and Christianity, and the influence exerted by Greece and Rome inspire Tillich and provide him with material to construct a system of thought out of it. A wider perspective, a broader vision of toleration, and a secular interest saturate the attempt of Tillich in his analysis of the manifold human conflicts. His historical understanding is a great help in overcoming the difficulties which necessarily accompany a task of such a magnitude.

The attempt of Paul Tillich to appre equally *thought* and *theology* would ended as a fruitless endeavour, if he had connected protestant thought with the p lem of culture. The welding of thought theology in Tillich clarifies the importan his system in the contemporary situat The traditional problems and issues disc in philosophy are endowed with a new vi and angle, at once fascinating and promi in the system of Tillich. In the We traditions of philosophy, where philosop inquiry is separated from theological and gious issues, the philosophical realism of Tillich, no doubt, strikes a new note, bu the same time, exposes him to criticism theological circles, where much weight is given to philosophical theology. How no attempt to understand Paul Tillich's v on thought and theology on the one and the relation of religious faith as a pri force to historical existence on the could be taken seriously without taking account the thesis set forth by him 'culture is the form of religion and relig the soul of culture'. This brings out width and secular basis of Tillich's the which is also a protest against the limits imposed on the discussion of the proble culture and religion and their mutually clusive and allied grounds.

II

Paul Tillich, in his important work, *Power and Justice*, attempts to clarif misleading interpretations of the concep love, power, and justice and provides a ba ed synthesis. The interpretations of important concepts are many. Tillich's sire to move towards unity and balan spite of the presence of contradictory conflicting elements, finds an incomp example, which depicts the resolving separateness lying in love, power, and justice in an ontological unity. Hence no wonder that, for Tillich, even non-being emerges as an element of Being. In the absence of a powerful tendency towards unity and oneness and a synoptic vision, the thought and system of Paul Tillich could not have provided solution to many conflicting problems which beset human life and culture. Human love is sublimated to cosmic level. Love becomes a power of supreme importance, akin to a cosmic principle which runs the show of the world. Separateness becomes a myth, and unity reigns supreme. Justice and harmony are not divorced from love; for Tillich, on the other hand, love is infused by them.

III

In the system of Tillich, theology emerges as an ally of philosophy. Neither philosophical analysis gains the upper hand nor theology moves in its own field, but the one inspires the other and expand together. Tillich maintains that philosophy ought to remain critical and should not become subservient to theology or religion. The philosophical approach of Paul Tillich towards theology and allied problems is, really, an effort of significance in the present context.

IV

The Existential philosopher Kierkegaard is an important figure in the history of modern philosophy. He has influenced both philosophers and theologians. But his influence has taken many different directions. A philosopher like Gabriel Marcel has come to believe that the influence of Kierkegaard has led him into many serious errors. These errors, he claims, he could not have committed in the absence of Kierkegaardian influence. One of these mistakes is the acceptance that 'becoming' stands prior to Being. In the case of Paul Tillich, we find that Kierkegaard's basic approach that system as such is not essential in philosophy and that it is only superficial has not been maintained. On the other hand, Tillich is an exponent of the necessity of system and a systematic approach to understand and expound philosophical and theological problems. System is essential to understand the essence of Christianity and other religions. Hence to believe that system is an enemy or opponent of a particular faith or religion is only a myth according to Tillich. Reason and rationality, treated methodologically, can only bear correct results, and any antipathy towards systematic approach is irrational and prone to lead one into wrong channels. Rational argument does not lead to meaninglessness when the natural knowledge of God is rejected. Tillich's emphasis on Being shows that there is no such thing as meaninglessness. The mere awareness of existence leads one to the awareness of the power of Being in us. God, according to Tillich, is Being itself or the Absolute. Being is an answer to meaninglessness.

V

Heidegger's quest to understand 'Being' and its nature and power leads him to the philosophies of Parmenides and Heraclitus. For Heidegger, the origin of ontology could be found only in the writings of pre-Socratics. Later philosophers dealt only with ideas which share no direct relationship with 'Being' as such. The analysis of 'Being' is the main problem of his major works. The concept of 'Being' could explain and elucidate all 'things-being'. Being is the only fundamental category and important fact, more important than 'becoming', 'thinking', etc.

Tillich accepts that ontological questions are of primary importance. He follows Heidegger in his conception that ontology is the foundation of metaphysics. Metaphysics is not fundamental. Further, Tillich makes clear the fundamental importance of ontological questions. But Tillich does not accept *in toto* the philosophic position of Heidegger. And his theology is much more optimistic about man and his existence, than the philosophical analysis of human existence by Heidegger.

Ontology deals with 'Being as it is'. And its purpose is not to deal with the nature of beings. Paul Tillich makes clear what ontology is, and he speaks as follows about the primacy of ontological questions.

'Ontology does not try to describe the nature of beings, either in their universal, generic qualities, or in their individual, historical manifestations. It does not ask about stars and planets, animals and men. It does not ask about events and those who act within these events. This is the task of scientific analysis and historical description. But ontology asks the simple and infinitely difficult question: What does it mean *to be?* What are the structures, common to everything that is, to everything that participates in being? One cannot avoid this question by denying that there are such common structures. One cannot deny that being is one and that the qualities and elements of being constitute a texture of connected and conflicting forces. This texture is one, and is so far as it *is* and given the power of being to each of its qualities and elements, it is one, but it is neither a dead identity nor a repetitious sameness. It is one in the manifoldness of its texture. Ontology is the attempt to describe this texture, to reveal its hidden nature through the word which belongs to Being and in which Being comes to itself. Yet let us not make a mistake: Ontology does not describe the infinite variety of beings, living and dead, sub-human and human. Ontology characterizes the texture of being itself, which is effective in everything that is, in all beings, living and dead, sub-human and huma Ontology precedes every other cogniti approach to reality. It precedes all scienc not always historically, but always in logi dignity and basic analysis. One does n need to look back at past centuries or removed parts of the world to discover t primacy of the ontological question. T best method for discovering it today is a ca ful analysis of the writings of leading a ontological philosophers or of anti-phi sophical scientists and historians. One w easily discover that, on almost every page the writings of these men, a certain num of basic ontological concepts are used, b surreptitiously, and therefore, often wrong One cannot escape ontology, if one wants know! For knowing means recogni something as Being. And Being is an i nitely involved texture, to be described by t never-ending task of ontology' (*Love Po and Justice*, pp. 19-20).

The problem of ontology is to underst 'Being' as it is. There is no science or which is not infused with the spirit of Bei The all-pervading nature of Being ov shadows everything and includes everyth Tillich wants to awaken the present gen tion to the significance of ontological qu tions. In the words of Heidegger, the supr acy and credit of man lies in the fact t he raises the question of the nature of Be 'Man is that being who asks what Being For Tillich, even non-Being is an element Being. It is his synoptic vision which ma him accept this position and develop a c herent outlook of reality and world.

TRADITIONS OF NEW YEAR IN INDIA

By Dr. Bratindra Kumar Sengupta

The heralding of the new year is a particularly happy event in the life of the society and the nation. Hence individuals stir up their activities on that auspicious morn with prayer and festivity, mirth and merriment. In India this occasion has a very good tradition of invocation of the Spirit and rededication to the meaning of life.

The first day of the solar month of Vaiśākha is observed as the New Year Day in the Indo-Gangetic basin of India. This day has been traditionally taken as the harbinger of the seasonal summer in this part. Thus the new year begins with the onset of the summer with its varied charms of the manifestation of Mother Nature. After the beauty of the spring has captivated man's mind, the summer comes not all of a sudden, but as a gradual evolution of the last vestiges of the vernal pleasantness. Kālidāsa, the immortal poet, in his *Ṛtusaṁhāra,* has, in the very first verse on the summer, described the peculiar pleasure one feels even in the 'hot-rayed season', as the cool moon is to be enjoyed and the dips in the waters time and again (with sportive enjoyments) are ever-refreshing. When the spring brings with it charms on all sides, as Kālidāsa has described *ibidem,* in the blossoming trees, waters full of lotuses, fragrant breeze, pleasant day-times, and refreshing evenings, we have an acme of the pleasure from Mother Nature. But, in the summer, we have also the pleasure drawn from the last vernal trails.

YEAR AS VEDIC DEITY

From the hoary times of the Vedic *ṛṣis,* we have a tradition of invoking Mother Nature in her seasonal expressions. In the *Ṛg-Veda* (I.164.48), the *mantra* being the well-known hymn known as the *Asya-vāmīyam,* we have a beautiful metaphor between the year conceived of as the Deity (*Saṁvatsarākhyā-devatā*) and a carriage-wheel. On the words *trīṇi nābhyāni* in this *mantra,* Sāyaṇa, the great commentator, gives his interpretation of three seasons—the summer, the monsoons, and the winter—compared metaphorically to the three navel-joints (in the carriage-wheel). Here, we do not have any mention of the spring (or the autumn). The summer might very well be taken as continuous with the spring after the freezing winter has passed away. Again, in *Ṛg-Veda* (I.187.2), we have an invocation to food as the Deity (*svādo pito madho pito*) in order that we may be saved. This has also a connection with the invocation to Mother Nature who expresses herself through the form of our protective sustenance. We shall see below how some of the rites and rituals developed in medieval times in this geographical part of the country were based on the cult of the fertility of the soil and the plenty of produce.

ATHARVA-VEDIC CONCEPTION

In the *Atharva-Veda* (XII.1), where the lofty hymn to Earth is preserved, we have a significant conception of Mother Earth as the Deity. She is invoked in glowing terms as the all-sustaining Mother and as the upholder of fertility, through her physical manifestation. This has a very important relation to what came in later centuries as the ceremonial rites for welcoming the new harvest. In the Vedic literature, again, in the *sūtra* periods we have a reference to the *āgrahāyaṇī* festival, celebrated on the full-moon day of the solar month of Mārgaśīrṣa (or Agrahāyaṇa), when the whole house was to be thoroughly cleaned by the householder and thereafter to be smoked. This may be said to have a parallel in the German New Year rites (rites of a very allied Indo-European race), when smoking of the house was practised.

Thus, in the Vedic literature, we have some traditions of rites and rituals, with hymns and prayers, for invoking Nature and welcoming the seasons.

These traditions of the Vedic times have been handed down to the medieval and modern centuries in this geographical belt of the country—in literature, religion, music, and art.

BENGAL RITUALS

In Bengal, the heralding of the first day of the solar month of Vaiśākha, synchronous with the New Year, is preceded by some ritualistic ceremonies and festivals. The *Biṣuva-saṁkrānti* day is the solstice preceding this New Year day, and the festival of *caraka* is even now performed on this day in the rural areas with great enthusiasm. Hosts of *ad hoc sannyāsins* perform the consummation of their month-long austerities on this day. Some folk-dances, folk-music, and folk-ceremonies are gone through by the village-folk, and fairs (*meḷās*) are also held. This Biṣuva-saṁkrānti is not confined to the Hindu fold in Bengal, though it is the most widespread amongst the Hindus; amongst the Buddhists, also, this particular *saṁkrānti* day is a day of solemn ceremonies. To them, a religious solemnity is associated with the day more than a folk-ritual. They offer prayers and take vows. It appears, then, that this is a very old ceremony in Bengal and is widespread amongst diverse sections of the populace. Moreover, we have in Bengal, synchronous with the New Year, Vāsantī-pūjā and Annapūrṇā-pūjā, as also Rāmanavamī, ceremonially observed even today in some homes of the Hindus. These are the vernal worship of the same Mother-Goddess who is so widely worshipped in Bengal in the autumn. We adore the Mother-Goddess to bless us with plenty of our produce, the success of our harvest, as She is the giver of all that is needed for our sustenance, and She never empties Her bowl of rice.

IN THE PANJAB

Let us, for the time being, shift our to the opposite side in this geographical In the Panjab, the land of the Sindhu, first day of the solar month of Vaiśākha even now very greatly observed through spread ceremonies. There, primarily, it be said to be the agriculturists' New Year The sturdy peasant-folk would be madd with joy on this day when the golden har are going to bring prosperity to their d There is, however, an undercurrent of imperative in this festival of the Panjab. illustrious Guru of Sikhism, Guru Go Singh, exhorted his followers on this au cious day to gain in moral strength to f the evil. Thus in the Panjab, as in Be the day is thrice-sacred for material, m and spiritual prosperity.

THE ASSAM FESTIVALS

Coming back, again, to the eastern si our area, we find a tremendous enthusias Assam at this time, when the tradit Bohag-Bihu is pompously celebrated all the State. The New Year is welcomed, farewell to the old, in week-long celebrat of dance and music, festivals and rit Young and old, men and women, are eq stirred up on the joyous occasion. There dance and music, in which the eternal b of affection is expressed between kin hearts. This aspect of the folk-literatu the Bihu ceremonies may be said to b been influenced by our classical literatu some extent, e.g. the reference to Kālid *Ṛtusaṁhāra* given above. Moreover, a between the heart of Nature and the hea Man is also expressed in the *Bihugīt.* same spirit of invoking Mother Nature is kinds of joyous expression for our all-r prosperity seems to permeate this truly most festival in this State through the spread celebrations of the Bohag-Bihu.

THE ETERNAL MESSAGE: TAGORE'S CONCEPTION

Rabindranath Tagore, the great po

modern India, in some of his essays on New Year and festivals, has remarkably brought out the significance of such national festivals. He shows that the underlying significance of all our joys on such auspicious occasions is to have a union of hearts, the greatest bond of all bliss. The All-Blissful Spirit is realized through such temporal festivals, where we give most and are given most. Let that eternal message of India, which consists in giving the most we can to others, inspire all of us on occasions like this. Let this true interpretation of the New Year be significantly realized also by all men of goodwill and understanding and let there be goodwill and fellowship among all people the world over.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Mrs. Marie Lousie Burke is very closely connected with the Vedanta Center of North California, San Francisco. Her book, *Swami Vivekananda in America: New Discoveries*, is a valuable addition to Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature, inasmuch as it contains many new facts and interesting incidents about Swami Vivekananda in America. As has been said in the introductory note to her article, she has been able to collect some more new material regarding Swamiji's American work and another book is under preparation. Her present article gives a very intimate and homely picture of Swamiji's stay in New York between December 6 and December 24, 1895, and, we are sure it will be found interesting by our readers, specially in this year of Swamiji's Birth Centenary Celebrations. . . .

Dr. B. V. Kishan, M.A., Ph.D., of the Department of Philosophy, Andhra University, Waltair, discusses in his article the philosophy of Paul Tillich, who is regarded as one of the leading contemporary philosophers. His theory of 'Being' has aroused much controversy among the philosophers, and this article will help our readers to know what this theory, in short, is. . . .

Dr. Bratindra Kumar Sengupta, M.A., D.Phil., Reader in the Department of Sanskrit, Burdwan University, tells about the various traditions of new year in India, in his interesting article this month, in which, incidentally, the first month—Vaiśākha—of the Bengali solar new year begins. He also points out the social significance of the customs and festivals connected with the observance of the advent of new year.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

CONTEMPORARY ETHICAL THEORIES. By LUTHER J. BINKLEY. ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY, FRANKLIN AND MARSHALL COLLEGE. *Published by Philosophical Library, Inc. 15 East 40th Street, New York-16. Pages 203. Price $4.75.*

The present century opened with a reaction against Idealism and Absolutism in the fields of logic, epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics. In more recent times, the Positivists have done their best to transform all philosophy into a kind of semantics. Dr. Binkley, in the book under review, makes a study of the ethical theories of such varied thinkers like Moore, Ross, Ewing, Ayer, Stevenson, Toulmin, Urmson, and Hare.

The Intuitionist theory of ethics was given an impetus by Moore, who took the good as a simple, unanalysable, and indefinite element. Yet it did not prevent him from arguing that the good is that which tends to produce the best of all possible consequences. The author is largely sympathetic to Moore's basic contention while he takes up the criticism levelled against Moore by Frankena, Field, and Hare. As against Moore, we have Ross who holds that *right* is an ultimate and irreducible notion and that the ultimate justification of a moral act is its character. The basic ethical term for Ewing is the *ought*. The sympathetic examination of the theories of these three is followed by a critical account of the emotive theory of ethics initiated by Ogden and Richards, followed by Ayer, and systematically developed by Stevenson. On this theory, the statements of normative ethics are factually meaningless, and these are pseudo-propositions resulting from a confusion in the use of language. Dr. Binkley does agree with the view that ethical judgements have an emotive aspect to them.

The recent trend is 'to study the actual use of ethical words in our moral discourse'. This is a study of the language of morals initiated by Wittgenstein, who later came to disown it. It was taken up by Toulmin who makes a search for good reasons to support ethical judgements, by Urmson who demands a detailed study of the moral uses of words, and by Hare who takes ethics to be the 'logical study of the language of morals'.

In the last chapter, the author makes a plea for an eclectic ethical theory based on the theories of Moore and Ross. In a plea to remove the muddles of classification, he lands himself in serious straits. Are moral judgements objective or subjective? Are they absolute or relative? Dr. Binkley would take them to be relative. This is the source of much erroneous thinking in contemporary ethical theory; and it is also the reason for ignoring the contribution of the Idealists.

Dr. P. S. Sastri

THE KINGDOM WITHIN. By Genevieve Caulfield. Edited by Ed. Fitzgerald. *Published by Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., London EC.4. Pages 278. Price 16 shillings.*

This is a brilliant autobiographical sketch interspersed with sparkling humour. The life of Miss Caulfield, born in Virginia, U.S.A., in 1888, and blind since infancy, is an 'admirable record of an indomitable spirit, undeterred and undismayed by the physical handicap of blindness', as a former U. S. Ambassador to Thailand puts it. Even while in her teens, she took delight in thinking of going to Japan and working for a closer understanding with the Asian people. But her loss of sight was a great hindrance, and education of the blind in those days was not so easy. Undaunted, however, she embarked on equipping herself properly, and in 1923, set sail for Japan, armed with a teacher's training and her own unfailing courage and faith in 'The Kingdom Within'. In fact, she has often felt that a hidden hand from within helped her steer clear of the many vicissitudes of life.

She successfully taught English to the Japanese for a number of years, till the threat of war made her presence a danger to her friends. Accompanied by her adopted daughter Haruko, a Japanese girl, she had to come over to Thailand. She succeeded in foundi school there for the blind, all by herself, and soon ma the people realize that a section of society that h so far been left uncared for could well be made useful members as the sighted ones. Among ma interesting cases, her account of the arrival and thi ing of the little Cantonese girl, Knitting, (pp. 174-76) revealing. The tale of this poor creature both humorous and sublime. The author rightly co cludes: 'I am happy to tell them (i.e. friends) th after she graduated from our school, Knitting stu in the United States for four years, and then, went b to Bangkok to teach English. ... I have often tho that, if the Bangkok School for the Blind had do nothing except produce this one successful student, t whole undertaking would have been well worth-whil'

A devout Catholic, Miss Caulfield is very partic about the sort of training to be imparted to yo children. She says: 'Spiritual, intellectual, and phys balance is what is required. ... Over-emphasis on t intellectual and physical, with no thought of the spirit has brought us to the present pass. Too many peo are erecting what they call spiritual values which reality, is nothing but the exaltation of an ideal bas upon pride. They call it spiritual, simply because it not material, but it is leading them to destruct People are seeking for something, but they are mak the mistake of attributing to nations or human lead what belongs to God' (pp. 208-9).

While in Thailand, the Second World War had ma her an internee. But her faith in the Almighty s tained her through the straining war years. She b not to close her school. Rather, the Government c to help her with handsome annual grants. After t termination of the war, she paid another visit to occup Japan to renew her contacts, and finally, came o to Viet Nam, *via* Bangkok, to start another school Saigon for the enlightenment of the blind.

Miss Caulfield's success may not be as big a spectacular as the achievements of Dr. Tom Doo Medice, which organizes a network of hospitals etc. Viet Nam and other parts of South East Asia; b surely, her contribution towards better understa among people of diverse nationalities, born of h *Weltanschauung*, cannot be overlooked. Moreover, T book proves that Kipling's cynical utterance, ' East is East and the West is West, and never t twain shall meet' is a myth. Does not the same hu heart clothed in kindred emotions dwell under sk white, brown, or dark?

This neatly printed book with a nice get-up has b written in very simple and elegant English. The c drawback it suffers from is its veiled sympathy f proselytism, which does not quite fit in with t author's universal outlook.

Swami Satyaghanana

ETHICAL THEORY FROM HOBBES TO KANT.

By William Curtis Swabey. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York-16. 1961. Pages 284. Price $4.75.*

At the present moment, when sociology, anthropology, social psychology, and other disciplines of that ilk are steadily undermining the foundations of eternal values, and are foisting on us relativistic concepts, attractive to our lower nature, it is good to have a survey of ethical theories which may counteract the undesirable influence of spurious theories. The noteworthy feature of this book is that the ethical thinkers discussed herein are treated as contemporaries. This gives their ideas a non-relativistic orientation which is very much to be desired. The author aptly remarks in the Preface that his concern is with the 'foundations of morals' rather than some specific practical question. This is exactly what we need in the present age of sophistic superficiality.

The author classifies the ethical thinkers under two heads—naturalists and transcendentalists. Where reason and the application of the method of reason to the systematization of ethical principles are concerned, the author is on firm ground. But where the supreme human faculty of intuition transcending reason comes in, he falters. Scant justice is done to Spinoza as a mystic as well as to the supra-rational elements in Kantian ethics. That Spinoza, and Kant too, in their exalted moments of experience, had direct, non-mediate perception (*darśana*) of truth is not understood. This is understandable in a culture which cannot see beyond reason and which counts mediaeval philosophic thinkers as men of little consequence. But it is a pity.

The author says that the ideas of moralists cannot be fused into a single, coherent systematic theory. We agree. But this does not mean that we cannot see a steady line of development, an ever-increasing purpose, running through the contributions of philosophers from Hobbes to Kant. The extent to which each successive thinker contributed to the elucidation of the eternal moral law should have been assessed. The author seems to have been satisfied with an evaluation of each thinker separately. Inter-linking of ideas and the resultant growth of theory have not been elucidated. Even so, the book will serve as a valuable textbook for our undergraduates in philosophy.

Professor P. S. Naidu

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND SARADA DEVI.

By Swami Apurvananda. *Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras-4. Pages 243. Price Rs. 2.50.*

By publishing a book like this, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, has done a commendable service to the common enquirer on the subject. Not that there is a dearth of literature in English on the life and teachings of the two saviours, but a handy book like the one under review is useful for more reasons than one.

Firstly, it has, in one short sweep, appreciably covered both Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother—an attempt never made before. The book makes the two look like tributaries of one main spiritual current which sprang forth from Dakshineshwar.

Secondly, the book is meant to serve as a good introduction to those who would like to study the two great biographies of the modern times. The author has done well to avoid all philosophical and scholastic implications and interpretations of the two saviours in this book.

Thirdly, the language and style of the author, including the marshalling of facts, are quite in consonance with the demand of the theme of the book.

The book is an English rendering of the author's Bengali work, *Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Ma*. The paper, printing, and the pictorial get-up of the book—all speak of the quality and the taste of the publishers. The two pictures of Sri Ramakrishna and Sarada Devi on art paper are additional attractions of the book. At its moderate price, the book is sure to be acceptable to all those interested.

Sri P. R. Bhatt

BENGALI

ĀCĀRYA ŚANKARA.

By Swami Apurvananda. *Published by Udbodhan Karyalaya, 1 Udbodhan Lane, Calcutta-3. 1962. Pages 262. Price Rs. 3.*

The book under review is a pretty detailed biography of Ācārya Śaṅkara. The life story of the Ācārya is shrouded in hearsay, and it is difficult to get at an authentic version of his eventful life. The author has taken great pains to go through the existing sources of information about the Ācārya and has sifted them to get at a reasonably authentic biography. There are only a few books on the life of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, specially in the Bengali language. The author, therefore, will win the gratitude of the Bengali reading public for this nice and sufficiently detailed presentation of the life story of the great Ācārya. The language is forceful and refreshing and the arrangement of events interesting. The author has done well to mention in footnotes the controversial points in the Ācārya's life. The bibliography, added at the end of the book, will help readers to enlarge their information about the Ācārya, if they so like. We wish this book to be read by as many people as possible, so that Ācārya Śaṅkara and his works become only more widely known and read. To be acquainted with the Ācārya and his philosophy is to acquire clearer vision to look at things from a truer angle.

The cover is attractively designed and the price quite reasonable, though we wish that the inside printing had been better and more correct.

S. C.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SARADAPITHA P.O. BELUR MATH, DT. HOWRAH

REPORT FROM JANUARY 1959 TO MARCH 1961

The activities of the various departments of this educational institution, for the period under review, were as follows:

The Vidyamandira: This residential college, affiliated to the Calcutta University, had 213 students on its rolls in the I.A. and I.Sc. classes in 1959. It was upgraded in 1960 into a three-year degree college, teaching both arts and science subjects, though the Intermediate course was continued as before for another session (1960-61). It had altogether 158 boys on its rolls during this period. There were 33 qualified teachers including 5 monastic members of the Order on the teaching staff.

In the hostels, the alumni were taken through a regular course of work, study, and prayer. Besides celebrating various national festivals and conducting other extra-mural activities, the students were occasionally taken out on excursion tours. Religious classes were held both in the college and in the hostel. There were adequate arrangements for games, sports, and physical training, including the N.C.C.

Altogether, 105 and 103 candidates appeared in the I.A. and I.Sc. examinations in 1959 and 1960, respectively. All of them came out successful in both the years, many of them securing university ranks, among the first ten places.

The Shilpamandira:

Licentiate Engineering Department: In this polytechnic, there were 514 and 529 students on the rolls in 1959 and 1960, respectively, studying for L.C.E., L.M.E., and L.E.E. courses. In 1959, 92 students were sent up for these examinations and all of them passed, 35 of them securing first class. In 1960, 147 out of the 148 candidates, who appeared in the examination, passed, 16 of them securing first class. The Institution ran a well-equipped library and reading room, having 2,696 valuable books on science, technology, and humanities.

The hostel of this department accommodated 98 and 110 students in 1959 and 1960, respectively. During the period, a hostel block for accommodating 150 students was constructed.

Industrial School and Mahesh Chandra Mechanical Section: These two departments were run with a view to provide opportunities to indigent boys, mostly refugees, for learning such trades as auto-mechanics, general mechanics, and so on. There were 240 and 137 students in 1959 and 1960, respectively. Amongst those who appeared in the final examination, 154 candidates came out successful in 1959, and 87 in 1960.

Research and Production Section: Its petrol g plants were considerably perfected during the ye under report.

Sales Section: Many of the products of the Shilpamandira were sold through this section.

The Janasikshamandira: With a view to spre literacy among the masses, to teach rudiments o health and hygiene, and to help them in various wa this department ran nine centres for adult educati both in 1959 and 1960, in selected Adivasi, industri and rural areas. Besides, an audio-visual unit exhibi film and lantern shows in different places. The libr had 14,713 books, 29 magazines, and 3 newspapers, i 1960. Through its several mobile units and central v 21,763 and 25,293 books were issued to 1,330 and 1,4 readers during 1959 and 1960, respectively.

Besides the care of the health of children, milk w freely distributed to children and expectant mothers i various localities. The quantity of milk distributed w 59,039½ lb. in 1959, and 68,951½ lb. in 1960. Fr tiffin, too, was given daily to 180 children. Other activities of this department were holding of various functi in the assembly hall of the department and yo movements and youth camps.

The Social Education Organizers' Training Centre: I 1959, 101 trainees, and in 1960, 90 trainees, representi different States of India, were trained. Lessons o first aid were also given to the trainees.

The Sikshamandira: This is a wholly residential B.T. college under the University of Calcutta. There w 59 and 112 students on its rolls in 1959 and 1960, respectively. A hostel with accommodation for 200 stude was under construction at the end of the period un review. All the candidates who appeared in the fi examination came out successful.

The Tattwamandira: This department fosters Sansk study. Public classes and lectures on religious subje were conducted by monastic members, besides celebrating the birthdays of prophets and other religious personalities. Efforts to start an institution for hig study and research in different branches of Sansk learning are under way.

Other activities: Besides the above, the Saradapi maintained a photography and film department, a d and agricultural wing, and also, a publication secti

Vivekananda University: It has been decided start a university during 1963, the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda. This will be organized keeping in view the ideals for which the Swami stood.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Number

Vol. LXVIII MAY 1963 No. 5

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत
Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

——:o:——

A HYMN TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

मूर्तमहेश्वरमुज्ज्वलभास्करमिष्टममरनरवन्द्यम् ।
वन्दे वेदतनुमुज्झितगर्हितकाञ्चनकामिनीबन्धम् ॥
कोटिभानुकरदीप्तसिंहमहो कटितटकौपीनवन्तम् ।
अभीरभीहुंकारनादितदिङ्मुखप्रचण्डताण्डवनृत्यम् ॥
भुक्तिमुक्तिकृपाकटाक्षप्रेक्षणमघदलविदलनदक्षम् ।
बालचन्द्रधरमिन्दुवन्द्यमिह नौमि गुरुविवेकानन्दम् ॥

I bow to Vivekananda, my spiritual guide, my object of worship, who is Lord Śiva incarnate, resplendent like the bright sun, adored (alike) by men and gods, the embodiment of the Vedas, who has completely overcome the bondage of the much-censured lust and gold, the lion (among men), brilliant with the rays of a million suns, who has nothing but the (*sannyāsin's*) loin-cloth on, who is dancing the violent dance (of Śiva), reverberating the quarters with the impassioned cry of 'fear not, fear not', a mere glance of whose eyes is enough to impart both enjoyment and liberation, who tramples with ease the myriad hordes of vice, who is the veritable Śiva with the crescent moon on the forehead, and who is worshipped by Indu.*

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* A pseudonym assumed by the composer, Sri Sarat Chandra Chakravarti.

FIVE VERSES TO VIVEKANANDA

By Swami Ramakrishnananda

अनित्यदृश्येषु विविच्य नित्यं तस्मिन् समाधत्त इह स्म लीलया ।
विवेकवैराग्यविशुद्धचित्तं योऽसौ विवेकी तमहं नमामि ॥ १ ॥

1. To him who, sifting out the Eternal from the transitory phenomena of this world, made it his sport to concentrate thereon his mind, purified by discrimination and renunciation—to that discriminating soul I salute.

विवेकजानन्दनिमग्नचित्तं विवेकदानैकविनोदशीलम् ।
विवेकभासा कमनीयकान्तिं विवेकिनं तं सततं नमामि ॥ २ ॥

2. To him whose mind was immersed in the bliss that comes of discrimination, whose nature delighted solely in kindling discrimination (in others), and whose beauty was made winsome by the glow of discrimination—to that discriminating soul my salutations ever go.

ऋतञ्च विज्ञानमधिश्रयत् यत् निरन्तरं चादिमध्यान्तहीनम् ।
सुखं सुरूपं प्रकरोति यस्य आनन्दमूर्तिं तमहं नमामि ॥ ३ ॥

3. Whose graceful form truth and knowledge have made their abode, and which imparts a joy incessant without beginning or end—to that embodiment of bliss I salute.

सूर्यो यथान्धं हि तमो निहन्ति विष्णुर्यथा दुष्टजनान् छिनत्ति ।
तथैव यस्याखिलनेत्रलोभं रूपं त्रितापं विमुखीकरोति ॥ ४ ॥

4. Verily, as the sun dispels the intense darkness, as the Lord Viṣṇu destroys the wicked ones, in exactly the same manner, whose handsome appearance, the cynosure of all eyes, drives away the threefold misery of life.

तं देशिकेन्द्रं परमं पवित्रं विश्वस्य पालं मधुरं यतीन्द्रम् ।
हिताय नृणां नरमूर्तिमन्तं 'विवेक-आनन्द' महं नमामि ॥ ५ ॥

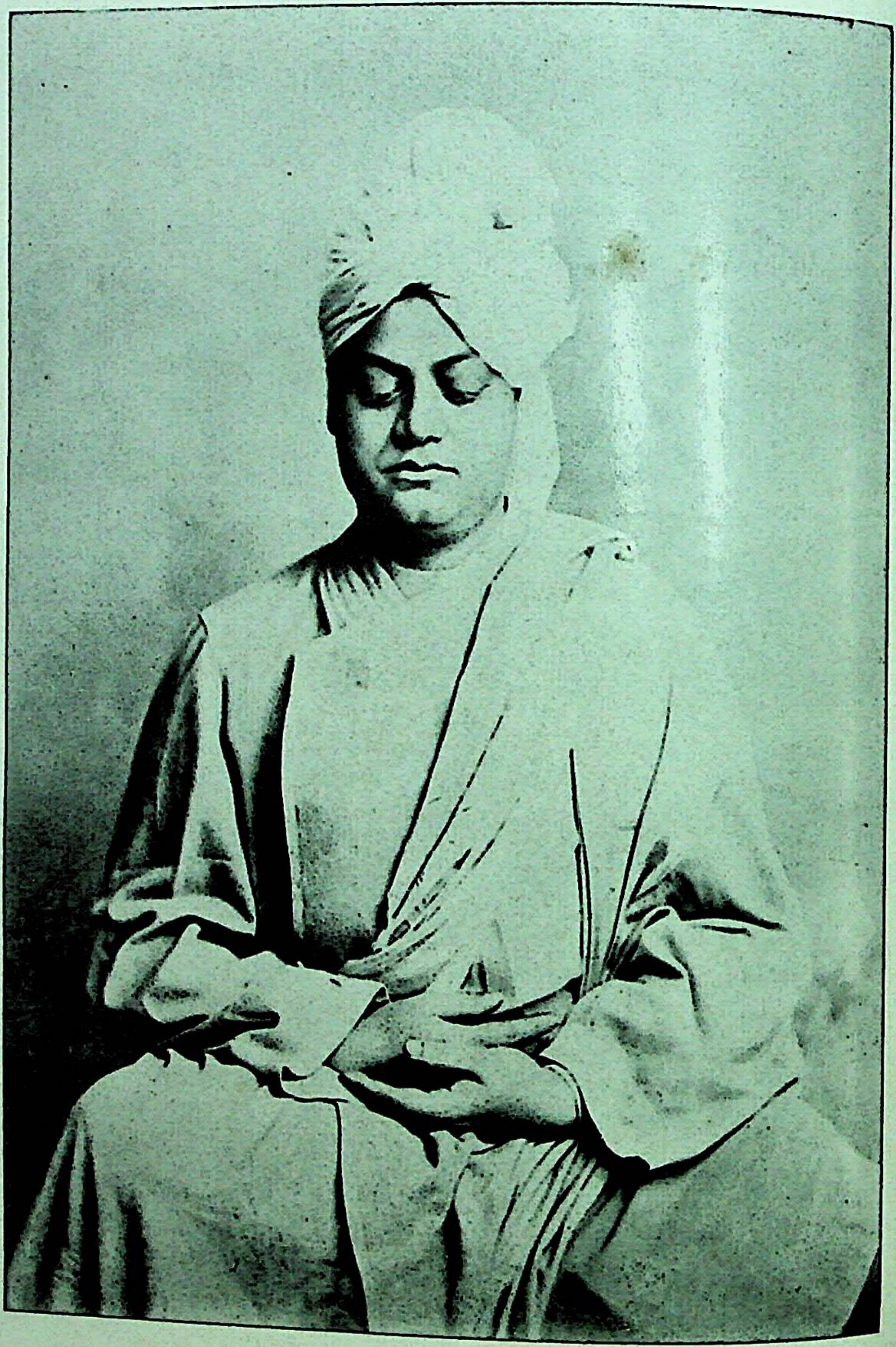
5. To that teacher of teachers, supremely pure, the guardian of the world, the sweet one, the prince of *yogins*, who took up the human form for the good of mankind—to that Vivekananda I prostrate myself.

नमः श्रीयतिराजाय विवेकानन्दसूरये ।
सच्चित्सुखस्वरूपाय स्वामिने तापहारिणे ॥

Salutation to that king of renouncers and controllers of passions, the sage Vivekananda, who is Sat-Cit-Ānanda (Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss Absolute) Itself, the spiritual preceptor, the remover of distress!

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

'I shall inspire men everywhere, until the world shall know that it is one with God.'



(London, 1896)

'Narendra is a great soul perfect in meditation.'

Sri Ramakrishna

THE VISION OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

[This passage (translated from the original Bengali) is from *Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Līlāprasaṅga* of Swami Saradananda. In this connection, the Swami says: 'The Master described this vision to us in his extraordinary simple language. ... Asking him about the Child of his vision, one day we came to know that the Master himself assumed the form of that Child.']

'One day I saw that, through *samādhi,* my mind was soaring high by a luminous path. Going beyond the gross world studded with sun, moon, and stars, it entered into the subtle world of ideas. As it ascended higher and higher, I found on both sides of the way ideal forms of gods and goddesses. It came gradually to the last extremity of that region. There, a luminous barrier separated the sphere of relative existence from that of the Absolute. Leaping over that fence, the mind entered by degrees the realm of the Absolute. I saw that there was no person or thing having a form. As if afraid to enter there, even the gods and goddesses, possessing heavenly bodies, exercised their authority over realms far below. But the very next moment I saw seven wise *ṛṣis* (sages), having bodies of divine light, seated there in *samādhi.* I felt that, in virtue and knowledge, love and renunciation, they had excelled even the gods and goddesses, what to speak of human beings. Lost in admiration, I was reflecting on their greatness, when I saw a portion of that undifferentiated luminous region condense into the form of a divine Child. Coming down to one of those *ṛṣis* and throwing Its soft and delicate arms round his neck, It embraced him and, afterwards, calling him with Its ambrosial words, sweeter than the music of the *vīṇā,* made great efforts to wake him up from *samādhi.* The *ṛṣi* woke from *samādhi* at the delicate and loving touch and looked on at that wonderful Child with half-shut eyes, free from winking. Seeing his bright face, full of delight, I thought that the Child was the treasure of his heart—their familiarity was of eternity. The extraordinary divine Child then expressed infinite joy and said to him: 'I am going; you, too, must come with me.' The *ṛṣi* said nothing at that request, but his loving eyes expressed his hearty assent. Afterwards, looking on the Child with loving eyes for some time, he entered again into *samādhi.* Astonished, then, I saw a fragment of his body and mind come down to the earth along the reverse path. Hardly had I seen Narendra for the first time, when I knew that he was that *ṛṣi.*'

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(*Translated from the original Bengali*)

[This letter was written to late Sri Manmatha Nath Bhattacharya, the then Deputy Accountant General, Madras. He was Swamiji's schoolmate, and the two were good friends. Swamiji also stayed with the late Sri Bhattacharya at times, while touring the country. This explains the intensely personal tone of the letter. We are thankful to Sri Mohit Kumar Bhattacharya, the late Sri Bhattacharya's son, for releasing this letter to us for publication.]

5th September 1894
America

Dear Mr. Bhattacharya,

I was much pleased to read your affectionate letter. I shall make inquiries about the weaving machine as soon as I can and let you know. Now I am resting at Annisquam, a village on the sea coast; soon I shall go to the city and attend to the matter of the machine. These seaside places are filled with people during the summer; some come to bathe in the sea, some to take rest, and some to catch husbands.

There is a strong sense of decorum in this country. You have to always keep yourself covered from neck to foot in the presence of women. You cannot so much as mention the normal functions of the body: nobody knows when anyone goes to the toilet—one has to live so circumspectly. In this country, you can blow your nose a thousand times into your handkerchief—there is no harm in that; but it is highly uncivilized to belch. Women sometimes are not embarrassed to expose their bodies above the waist—you must have seen the kind of low-cut gown they wear—but they say that to go bare-foot is as bad as being naked. Just as we always dwell on the soul, so they take care of the body, and there is no end to the cleaning and the embellishing of it. One who fails to do this has no place in society.

Our method of cooking with cow dung fuel and eating on the floor they consider as eating like pigs: they say that the Hindus have no sense of disgust and that, like pigs, they eat cow dung. The word 'cow dung' is taboo in English. On the other hand, numbers of people will drink water with the same glass without thinking of washing it, and they rarely observe the rule that things must be washed before cooking. But should the clothes of the cook be a little soiled, they will throw her out. The table-ware is all spick and span. They are the richest people on earth; their enjoyments and luxuries beggar description.

In Rajputana they imitate the Mohammedans in their mode of dining, which is, on the whole, good. They sit on a low seat and place their plate of rice on a low table. This is much better than spreading a banana leaf on the earthen floor plastered with cow dung and filth. And how disastrous if the leaf gets torn! The Hindus did not know much about clothes or food. Moreover, whatever Hindu civilization there was existed in the Punjab and the north-west provinces, . . .

Our women lose caste if they put on shoes, but the Rajput women lose their caste if they don't put on shoes! Says Manu: 'One shall always wear shoes.' There is no denying that people should have a decent enough standard of living. I say they should be neat and clean even though not luxurious. . . . I say, why do we have to be Englishmen? It is enough for the present if we imitate our brothers of the western provinces. If group after group of Indians travel all over the world and back for some years, the face of India will be changed within twenty years by that alone; nothing else need be done. But how will anything happen if the people of one village do not visit the next? However, everything will take place by and by. By and by, the stubborn Bengali boys will awaken the country. But, Manmatha Babu, you will have to stop this shameful business of marrying off nine-year-old girls. That is the root of all sins. It is a very great sin, my boy. Consider further what a terrible thing it was that when the Government wanted to pass a law stopping early marriage, our worthless people raised a tremendous howl! If we don't stop it ourselves, the Government will naturally intervene, and that is just what it wants to do. All the world cries fie upon us. You remain shut up in your homes, but the people outside spit upon you. How far can I quarrel with them? What a horror—even a father and mother allow their ten-year-old daughter to be given in marriage to a full-grown fat husband! O Lord, is there any punishment unless there has been a sin? It is all the fruit of *karma*. If ours were not a terribly sinful nation, then why should it have been booted and beaten for seven hundred years?

Now, just as in our country the parents suffer a lot to have their daughters married, here in the same way the girls suffer—the parents only a little—it is the job of the girls to capture husbands. I am now closely associated with them in all their affairs; I am, as it were, a woman amongst women. Therefore I have seen, and am seeing, all their play. To give dinners, to dance, to go to musical parties, to go to the watering places—all that is all right. But all the while the young women are scheming within themselves how to capture husbands. They hang around the boys. The boys, on the other hand, are so cautious that, though they mingle with the girls and flirt with them all the time, when it is time to surrender they run away. The boys place the girls above themselves; they show them respect and slave for them; but the moment the girls stretch their hands to catch them, they run away beyond their reach. After many efforts of this kind, a girl succeeds in capturing a boy. If the girl has money, then many a boy dances attendance upon her, but the poor have great difficulty. If a poor girl is exceedingly beautiful, she can marry quickly; otherwise, she has to wait all her life. Just as in our country, so here, one marriage in a thousand takes place through love and courtship; the rest are based on money. After that, quarrel, and then, 'Get out!'—divorce. We do not have this; the only way out is to hang oneself. It is the same in all countries. Only, here the girls take matters into their own hands; and in our country, we get the help of the parents to give their married life a decent appearance. The result is the same in either case.

. . . . . .

Nowadays, however, American girls don't want to marry. During the Civil War a large number of men were killed and women began to do all kinds of work. Since then, they have not wanted to give up the rights they have acquired. They earn their own living, and therefore they say: 'There is no use in marrying. If we truly fall in love, then we shall marry; otherwise, we shall earn and meet our own expenses.' Even if the father is a millionaire, the son has to earn enough before he marries. One may not marry depending on an allowance from the father. The girls also want the same thing now. When a son marries he becomes like a stranger to his own family, but when a girl marries she brings her husband, as it were, into her parents' home. Men will visit their wives' parents ten times, but rarely go to their own parents. Yet they are very much afraid of having their mothers-in-law on their neck.

In this country, there are rivers of wealth and waves of beauty, and an abundance of knowledge everywhere. The country is very healthy; they know how to enjoy this earth. . . . When the princes of Europe become poor they come to marry here. The average American doesn't like this; but some rich, beautiful women fall for the titles. Yet it is very difficult for American women to live in Europe. The husbands of this country are slaves of their wives; but the European wives are slaves to their husbands—this the American women don't like. In everything, the men here have to say, 'Yes, dear'; otherwise the wives lose face before people.

The women in America are very sentimental and have a mania for romance. I am, however, a strange sort of animal who hasn't any romantic feeling, and therefore they could not sustain any such feeling toward me and they show me great respect. I make all of them call me 'father' or 'brother'. I don't allow them to come near me with any other feeling, and gradually they have all been straightened out. . . .

The ministers in this country . . . are eager to throw sinners into hell. A few of them are very good, however. . . . I have a great reputation among the women in this country. I have not as yet seen a single unchaste girl among the unmarried. It is either a widow or a married woman who turns unchaste. The unmarried girls are exceedingly good, because their future is bright. . . .

Those emaciated Western women, looking like old dried-up fruit, whom you see in India, are English, and the English are an ugly race amongst the Europeans. In America, the best blood strains of Europe have blended, and therefore, the American women are very beautiful. And how they take care of their beauty! Can a woman retain her beauty if she gives birth to children . . . every hour from her tenth year on? Damn nonsense! What a terrible sin! Even the most beautiful woman of our country will look like a black owl here. Yet it must be admitted that the women of the Punjab have very well-drawn features. Many of the American women are very well educated and put many a learned professor to shame; nor do they care for anyone's opinion. And as regards their virtues: what kindness, what noble thought and action! Just think, if a man of this country were to visit India, nobody would even touch him; yet here I am allowed to do as I please in the houses of the best families—like their own son! I am like a child; their women shop for me, run errands for me. For example: I have just written to a girl for information about the machine, which she will gather carefully and send on to me. Again, a phonograph was sent to the Maharajah of Khetri: the girls managed the whole affair very well. Lord! Lord! It is the difference between heaven and hell! 'They are the goddess Lakṣmī in beauty and the goddess Sarasvatī in talents and accomplishments.' This cannot be achieved through the study of books. I say, can you send out some men and women to see the world? Only then will the country wake up—not through the reading of books. The men here are very clever in earning wealth. Where others do not see even dust, there they see gold.

Whoever will leave India and visit another country will earn great merit. * Keeping aloof from the community of nations is the only cause for the downfall of India. Since the English came, they have been forcing you back into communion with other nations, and you are visibly rising again. Everyone that comes out of the country confers a benefit on the whole nation; for it is by doing that alone that your horizon will expand. And as women cannot avail themselves of this advantage, they have made almost no progress in India. There is no station of rest; either you progress upwards or you go back and die out. The only sign of life is going outward and forward and expansion. Contraction is death. Why should you do good to others? Because that is the only condition of life; thereby you expand beyond your little self; you live and grow. All narrowness, all contraction, all selfishness is simply slow suicide, and when a nation commits the fatal mistake of contracting itself and of thus cutting off all expansion and life, it must die. Women similarly must go forward or become idiots and soulless tools in the hands of their tyrannical lords. The children are the result of the combination of the tyrant and the idiot, and they are *slaves*. And this is the whole history of modern India. Oh, who would break this horrible crystallization of death? Lord help us!* Gradually, all this will come about; 'One should cross a road slowly and cautiously; one should patch a quilt carefully and cautiously; so should one be slow and cautious in crossing a mountain'.

The papers have arrived duly and in good shape; there has not been any difficulty about that. The enemy has been silenced. Consider this: they have allowed me, an unknown young man, to live among their grown-up young daughters, and when my own countryman, Mazoomdar, says I am a rogue, they don't pay any attention! How noble they are, and how kind! I shall not be able to repay this debt even in a hundred lives. I am like a foster son to the American women; they are really my mother. If they don't flourish in every way, who would?

A while back several hundred intellectual men and women were gathered in a place called Greenacre, and I was there for nearly two months. Every day I would sit in our Hindu fashion under a tree, and my followers and disciples would sit on the grass all around me. Every morning I would instruct them, and how earnest they were!

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* The passage between this asterisk and the next is original English.

The whole country now knows me. The ministers are very angry; but, naturally, not all of them. There are many followers of mine amongst the learned ministers of this country. The ignorant and the stubborn amongst them don't understand anything but only make trouble, and thereby they only hurt themselves. By abusing me, Mazoomdar has lost three-fourths of what little popularity he had in this country. I have been adopted by them. When anyone abuses me he is condemned everywhere by the women.

I cannot say when I shall return to India, possibly next winter. There I shall have to wander, and here also I do the same.

There is nothing more to add. Please don't make this letter public. You understand, I have to be careful about every word I say—I am now a public man. Everybody is watching, particularly the clergy.

Yours faithfully,
Vivekananda

Now and then, at long intervals of time, a being finds his way to this planet who is unquestionably a wanderer from another sphere; who brings with him to this sorrowful world some of the glory, the power, the radiance of the far distant region from which he came. He walks among men, but he is not at home here. He is a pilgrim, a stranger, he tarries but a night.

He shares the life of those about him, enters into their joys and sorrows, rejoices with them, mourns with them, but through it all, he never forgets who he is, whence he came, or what the purpose of his coming. He never forgets his divinity. He remembers that he is the great, the glorious, the majestic Self. He knows that he came from that ineffable, supernal region which has no need of the sun or moon, for it is illumined by the Light of lights. He knows that he *was,* long before the time when 'all the sons of God sang together for joy'. ...

A saint is more holy, more pure, more single-minded than ordinary men. But with Swami Vivekananda, there could be no comparison. He was in a class by himself. He belonged to another order. He was not of this world. He was a radiant being who had descended from another, a higher sphere for a definite purpose. One might have known that he would not stay long.

Is it to be wondered at that nature itself rejoices in such a birth, that the heavens open and angels sing paeans of praise?

Blessed is the country in which he was born, blessed are they who lived on this earth at the same time, and blessed, thrice blessed are the few who sat at his feet.

SISTER CHRISTINE

OUR SUBMISSION

[EDITORIAL]

We have great pleasure in placing in the hands of our readers this special number of *Prabuddha Bharata*, our humble token effort to commemorate the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda, with whose sacred blessings this journal started its march in the year 1896. With regard to the conduct of the journal he wrote: 'Be obedient and faithful to the cause of Truth, humanity, and your country, and you will move the world.'

How far *Prabuddha Bharata* has been able to stand by the command of its leader and what it has accomplished and what it has failed to achieve during its long existence for nearly seven decades we would rather leave to our friends and critics to determine. But this much we may claim that we have made sincere efforts to be faithful to our leader and stand for what India was, is, and will be. 'The national ideals of India', the Swami declared, 'are renunciation and service.' In her art and science, in her commerce and industry, in her social organization and administrative set-up, India has never overlooked this basic concept of life. Maybe, the results of this outlook have not always been as common estimates would have them be. The nation has seen several vicissitudes during her long course of life. But this fact cannot be gainsaid that it is this spiritual outlook that has kept the life-blood of the nation still flowing vigorously, and has enabled her to withstand 'the shocks of centuries, of hundreds of foreign invasions, of hundreds of upheavals of manners and customs'. Not only this. 'India is still living, because she has her own quota yet to give to the general store of the world's civilization.'

We believe that this quota is nothing short of 'the spiritualization of the human race'. The world, not excluding ourselves, must be reminded time and again that man is divine and that his salvation lies in the manifestation of this Divinity. We must never forget that real happiness and progress in human society are to be brought about 'not with the power of the flesh, but with the power of the spirit; not with the flag of destruction, but with the flag of peace and love'. This is what *Prabuddha Bharata* has always sought to tell its numerous readers in different parts of the world.

On this auspicious occasion which commemorates the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda, who, as Dr. S. Radhakrishnan said the other day, 'embodied the spirit of this country' and 'was a symbol of her spiritual aspirations and fulfilment', let us once again earnestly strive to understand what Swamiji stood for and what he expected of us. Let us partake of his deep faith in the divine nature of man and let us imbibe, to the best of our capacity, at least a bit of his spirit of love and unity, of service and sacrifice, of fearlessness and courage. Let us understand afresh the import of his message—the message of strength. Strength of soul, strength of mind, strength of body—bereft of all pettiness of purpose and narrowness of thought—that is what the Swami wanted us to cultivate. And his message was not for one time, but for all times; not for a people, but for all peoples; not for the achievement of an ephemeral earthly end and stop at that, but for an all-out effort for the attainment of the supreme realization of the oneness of all souls—the grand unity which is the quintessence of Vedānta. 'Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached' was his clarion call.

Prabuddha Bharata, on its part, while paying its respectful tribute to the memory of its illustrious leader, rededicates itself to the service of India and the world, and pledges itself anew to carry fearlessly the message of Swami Vivekananda—the eternal voice of immortal India—to the four corners of our planet and help lay to rest the spectres of ignorance, greed, jealousy, and distrust, which threaten to make a hell of this, our fair earth.

HOMAGE TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

I have come here (Belur Math) to pay my homage and respect to the revered memory of Swami Vivekananda, whose birthday is being celebrated today (1923). I have gone through his works very thoroughly, and after having gone through them, the love that I had for my country became a thousand-fold. I ask you, young men, not to go away empty-handed without imbibing something of the spirit of the place where Swami Vivekananda lived and died.

Mahatma Gandhi

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The going forth of Vivekananda marked out by the Master (meaning Sri Ramakrishna) as the heroic soul destined to take the world between his two hands and change it, was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake, not only to survive but to conquer.

Swami Vivekananda was a soul of puissance, if ever there was one, a very lion among men. We perceive his influence still working gigantically, we know not well how, we know not well where, in something that is not yet formed, something leonine, grand, intuitive, upheaving, that has entered the soul of India, and we say, Behold! Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his Mother, and in the Soul of her children.

Sri Aurobindo

* * *

Vivekananda has said that there is the power of Brahman in every human being; also that it is through the poor and the dispossessed that Nārāyaṇa seeks and awaits our service. What a grand message! It lights up for man's consciousness the path to limitless liberation from the trammels and limitations of his self. This is not ethical injunction laying down any specific rule of conduct, no narrow commandment for the regulation of our behaviour. Opposition to untouchability is inherent in the Message—opposition not on any ground of political expediency, but because the Message is incompatible with insult to the humanity of Man, for untouchability is a self-inflicted insult to everyone of us.

And because the Message of Vivekananda is a call of awakening to the totality of our Manhood, that it has set so many of our youths on diverse paths to freedom through Work and through Renunciation and Sacrifice.

Rabindranath Tagore

* * *

A striking figure, clad in yellow and orange, shining like the sun of India in the midst of the heavy atmosphere of Chicago, a lion head, piercing eyes, mobile lips, movements swift and fast—such was my first impression of Swami Vivekananda, as I met him in one of the rooms set apart for the use of the delegates to the Parliament of Religions. Monk, they called him, not unwarrantably, but warrior-monk was he, and the first impression was of the warrior rather than of the monk, for he was off the platform, and his figure was instinct with pride of country, pride of race—the representative of the oldest of living religions, surrounded by curious gazers of nearly the youngest, and by no means inclined to give step, as though the hoary faith he embodied was in aught inferior to the noblest there. India was not to be shamed before the hurrying arrogant West by this her envoy and her son. He brought her message, he spoke in her name, and the herald remembered the dignity of the royal land whence he came. Purposeful, virile, strong, he stood out, a man among men, able to hold his own.

On the platform another side came out. The dignity and the inborn sense of worth and power still were there, but all was subdued to the exquisite beauty of the spiritual message which he had brought, to the sublimity of the matchless evangel of the East which is the heart, the life of India, the wondrous teaching of the Self. Enraptured, the huge multitude hung upon his words; not a syllable must be lost, not a cadence missed! 'That man a heathen!' said one, as he came out of the great hall, 'and we send missionaries to his people! It would be more fitting that they should send missionaries to us.'

ANNIE BESANT

* * *

Rooted in the past and full of pride in India's heritage, Vivekananda was yet modern in his approach to life's problems and was a kind of bridge between the past of India and her present. ... He was a fine figure of a man, imposing, full of poise and dignity, sure of himself and his mission, and at the same time, full of a dynamic and fiery energy and a passion to push India forward.

Vivekananda came as a tonic to the depressed and demoralized Hindu mind and gave it self-reliance and some roots in the past. He started new movements of thought. While he drank from the rich streams of English literature, his mind was full of ancient sages and heroes of India, his thoughts and deeds and the myths and traditions which he had imbibed from his childhood. ...

He gave us something which brings us, if I may use the word, a certain pride in our inheritance. He did not spare us. He talked of our weaknesses and our failings, too. He did not wish to hide anything. Indeed, he should not. Because we have to correct those failings, he deals with those failings also. Sometimes he strikes hard at us, but sometimes points out the great things for which India stood and which, even in the days of India's downfall, made her, in some measure, continue to be great.

So what Swamiji has written and said is of interest and must interest us and is likely to influence us for a long time to come. He was no politician in the ordinary sense of the word and yet he was, I think, one of the great founders—if you like, you may use any other word—of the national modern movement of India, and a great number of people who took more or less an active part in that movement in a later date drew their inspiration from Swami Vivekananda. Directly or indirectly, he has powerfully influenced the India of today. And I think that our younger generation will take advantage of this fountain of wisdom, of spirit and fire, that flows through Swami Vivekananda.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

* * *

I cannot write about Vivekananda without going into raptures. Few, indeed, could comprehend or fathom him—even among those who had the privilege of becoming intimate with him. His personality was rich, profound, and complex, and it was this personality—as distinct from his teachings and writings—which accounts for the wonderful influence he has exerted on his countrymen. Swami Vivekananda, reckless in his sacrifice, unceasing in his activity, boundless in his love, profound and versatile in his wisdom, exuberant in his emotions, merciless in his attacks, but yet simple as a child—he was a rare personality in this world of ours.

Swamiji was a full-blooded masculine personality—and a fighter to the core of his being. He was consequently a worshipper of Śakti and gave a practical interpretation to the Vedānta for the uplift of his countrymen. 'Strength, strength is what the Upaniṣads say'—that was a frequent cry of his. He laid the greatest stress on character-building.

I can go on for hours and yet fail to do the slightest justice to that great man. He was so great, so profound, so complex. A Yogi of the highest spiritual level in direct communion with the Truth, who had, for the time being, consecrated his whole life to the moral and spiritual uplift of his nation and of humanity, that is how I would describe him. If he had been alive, I would have been at his feet. Modern India is his creation—if I err not.

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

* * *

Vivekananda not only made us conscious of our strength, he also pointed out our defects and drawbacks. ... India was then steeped in *tamas* (ignorance and unwisedom) and mistook weakness for non-attachment and peace. That is why Vivekananda went so far as to say that criminality was preferable to lethargy and indolence. He made people conscious of the *tāmasika* state they were in, of the need to break out of it and stand erect so that they might realize in their own lives the power of the Vedānta. Speaking of those who enjoyed the luxury of studying philosophy and the scriptures in the smugness of their retired life, he said football-playing was better than that type of indulgence. Through a series of *obiter dicta*, he rehabilitated the prestige of India's soul force and pointed out to the *tamoguṇa* (unwisdom) that had eclipsed her. He taught us: 'The same

Soul resides in each and all. If you are convinced of this, it is your duty to treat all as brothers and serve mankind.' People were inclined to hold that, though all had equal right to the *tattva-jñāna* (knowledge of the Spirit), the difference of high and low should be maintained in the day-to-day dealings and relations. Swamiji made us see the truth that *tattva-jñāna*, which had no place in our everyday relationship with our fellow beings, and in our activities was useless and inane. He, therefore, advised us to dedicate ourselves to the service of 'Daridranārāyaṇa' (God manifested in the hungry, destitute millions) to their upliftment and edification. The word 'Daridranārāyaṇa' was coined by Vivekananda and popularized by Gandhiji.

Acharya Vinoba Bhave

* * *

Vivekananda saved Hinduism in India and that was why he was born in the nineteenth century and shaped by Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. I was a law student living in Castle Kernan on the Madras Beach, when Swami Vivekananda arrived back from Chicago in 1896, after becoming world-famous by then. He stayed for about a month in Castle Kernan then, and I look back to those days with pride and joy. *Prabuddha Bharata* was started then and Madras was thrilled by Swamiji's lectures. Hinduism arose from the grave as Jesus did.

C. Rajagopalachari

* * *

In the two words, equilibrium and synthesis, Vivekananda's constructive genius may be summed up. He embraced all the paths of the spirit; the four Yogas in their entirety, renunciation and service, art and science, religion and action from the most spiritual to the most practical. Each of the ways that he taught had its own limits, but he himself had been through them all, and embraced them all. As in a quadriga, he held the reins of all four ways of truth, and he travelled towards Unity along them all simultaneously. He was the personification of the harmony of all human Energy.

But the formula could not have been discovered by the brilliant intellect of the 'Discriminator', if his own eyes had not seen its realization in the harmonious personality of Ramakrishna. The angelic Master had instinctively resolved all the dissonances of life into a Mozartian harmony, as rich and sweet as the Music of the Spheres. And hence the work and the thought of the great disciple was all carried out under the sign of Ramakrishna. . . .

Vivekananda wished this harmony, that had come to fruition in one privileged being and had been enjoyed by a few select souls, to be extended to the whole of India and the world. Therein lies his courage and originality. He may not have produced one single fresh idea; he was essentially the offspring of the womb of India, one of the many eggs laid by that indefatigable queen and throughout the course of ages. . . . But all her different ants never combined into an ant-hill. Their separate thoughts seemed to be incompatible, until they appeared in Ramakrishna as a symphony. The secret of their divine order was thus revealed to Vivekananda, and he set out to build the City—*Civitas Dei*—the City of Mankind on the foundation of this golden concrete. But he had not only to build the city, but the souls of its inhabitants as well. . . .

Brief though his life, the architect had accomplished his work. He had inserted in the massive block of India 'a lever for the good of humanity which no power can drive back'.

Sixteen years passed between Ramakrishna's death and that of his great disciple . . . years of conflagration. . . . He (Vivekananda) was less than forty years of age when the athlete lay stretched upon the pyre. But the flame of that pyre is still alight today. From his ashes, like those of the Phoenix of old, has sprung anew the conscience of India—the magic bird—faith in her unity and in the Great Message, brooded over from Vedic times by the dreaming spirit of his ancient race—the message for which it must render account to the rest of mankind.

Romain Rolland

* * *

Many are the moments of sadness since the Swamijee has gone away. It seems that all the gods had left us, for his divine presence spread peace and tranquillity wherever he went; the tumult of uncertainty departed from my soul at the sound of his magic voice. His very form and every mood were those of tender compassion and sympathy. None knew him but to love him; those of us who have had the royal good fortune to have met him in the flesh will some day realize that we have met the true incarnation of the divine One.

To me he is 'The Christ', than whom a greater one has never come; his great and liberal soul outshines all other things; his mighty spirit was as free and liberal as the great sun, or the air of heaven.

No being lived so mean or low, be it a man or a beast, that he would not salute. His was not only an appeal to the poor and lowly but to kings and princes and mighty rulers of the earth, to grand masters of learning, of finances, of art, and of the sciences, to leaders of thought and of creeds, to mighty intellects, philosophers, and poets. Vivekananda shook the world of thought on all its higher lines. Great teachers bowed reverently at his feet, the humble followed reverently to kiss the hem of his garments; no other single human being was reverenced more during his life than was Vivekananda.

In the few short weeks that I was with him, few could know him better than I. At first I attended him through a severe spell of sickness, then he sat with me partly through a paralytic stroke; he would charm me to sleep and enchant me awake. So passed the sublimest part of my life, and now that sweet memory lingers and sustains me ever and always.

Dr. M. H. Logan

TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(On His Hundredth Birth Anniversary)

By An American Devotee

['An American Devotee' is connected with the Vedanta Center of St. Louis, Missourie, U.S.A. Her poem is a tribute of her deep respect to Swami Vivekananda on his hundredth birth anniversary.]

Salutations to Thee,
O Knower of God, Messenger from God.
The rising sun heralded Thy birth,
In the holy land of India,
As the longest night was ending,
And the East awaited a new day.
Salutations to Thee,
O Being of Light,
Beyond the *guṇas*, ever-perfect,
Ever-free.
We bow down to Thee in adoration,
And humbly lay our offering,
Of love and gratitude,
At Thy blessed feet,
On this hundredth anniversary
Of Thy auspicious birth,
Ordained by our Lord and Master,
Sri Ramakrishna,
For the fulfilment
Of His spiritual mission,
To humanity.
Salutations to Thee,
O Radiant One.
The majesty and beauty,
Of Thy saintly presence,
And the charm and quality,
Of Thy melodious voice,
Have defied description.
Though we no longer see Thee,
With mortal eye,
Yet, through Guru's grace,
We feel Thy blessings in our hearts,
And know Thou art still here.
Though we no longer hear Thee,
With mortal ear,
Chanting the Sanskrit *ślokas*,
And affirming in song or sermon,
The Vedic verities,
That proclaim the divinity of man,
Yet, Thy universal message is not lost.
Great teachers following after Thee,
Have carried it to the farthermost
Parts of our globe,
And Thy eloquent words,
Still have power.
Heard from pulpit,
Or leaping like tongues of flame,
From printed page,
They kindle anew the fire of devotion,
Within our hearts,
And burn away the dross of ignorance,
Within our minds.
O Thou, the Bestower of Knowledge,
Born to remove the miseries of mankind,
Thy greatness and glory are beyond
Our ken.
No act of ours can add or detract,
No tribute of ours is worthy.
Rather, out of our great need,
We come humbly asking of Thee,
And seeking Thy grace,
In supplication and self-surrender.
Be merciful unto us, O Merciful One,
And grant us this boon: We pray,
That Thou wilt increase our strength,
And devotion;
That Thou wilt shine the light
Of Thy knowledge within us;
And draw us ever nearer to Him,
Who out of His infinite love for all,
Brought Thee to earth,
On this blessed day.

THE WORKS OF MY MASTER

By Sister Nivedita

[Sister Nivedita (Miss Margaret E. Noble) was one of the rare souls who, at the instance of Swami Vivekananda laid down her life to the service of our motherland, and her valuable contribution to the regeneration of Indian art, culture, and nationalism is yet to be properly assessed. Her devotion to her Guru was unique and, among other books, her '*The Master as I Saw Him*' is a magnificent tribute of her deep devotion to Swami Vivekananda. The following excerpt is from her Introduction to *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda.*]

The Swami Vivekananda would have been less than he was, had anything in this Evangel of Hinduism been his own. Like the Kṛṣṇa of the *Gītā,* like Buddha, like Śaṅkarācārya, like every great teacher that Indian thought has known, his sentences are laden with quotations from the Vedas and Upaniṣads. He stands merely as the Revealer, the Interpreter to India of the treasures that she herself possesses in herself. The truths he preaches would have been as true, had he never been born. Nay more, they would have been equally authentic. The difference would have lain in their difficulty of access, in their want of modern clearness and incisiveness of statement, and in their loss of mutual coherence and unity. Had he not lived, texts that today will carry the bread of life to thousands might have remained the obscure disputes of scholars. He taught with authority, and not as one of the pundits. For he himself had plunged to the depths of the realization which he preached, and he came back like Rāmānuja, only to tell its secrets to the pariah, the outcast, and the foreigner.

And yet this statement, that his teaching holds nothing new, is not absolutely true. It must never be forgotten that it was the Swami Vivekananda who, while proclaiming the sovereignty of the Advaita philosophy, as including that experience in which all is one, without a second, also added to Hinduism the doctrine that Dvaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, and Advaita are but three phases or stages in a single development, of which the last-named constitutes the goal. This is part and parcel of the still greater and more simple doctrine that the many and the One are the same Reality, perceived by the mind at different times and in different attitudes.

It is this which adds its crowning significance to our Master's life, for here he becomes the meeting-point, not only of East and West, but also of past and future. If the many and the One be, indeed, the same Reality, then it is not all modes of worship alone, but equally all modes of work, all modes of struggle, all modes of creation, which are paths of realization. No distinction, henceforth, between sacred and secular. To labour is to pray. To conquer is to renounce. Life is itself religion. To have and to hold is as stern a trust as to quit and to avoid.

This is the realization which makes Vivekananda the great preacher of *karma,* not as divorced from, but as expressing *jñāna* and *bhakti.* To him, the workshop, the study, the farmyard and the field, are as true and fit scenes for the meeting of God with man, as the cell of the monk or the door of the temple. To him, there is no difference between service of man and worship of God, between manliness and faith, between true righteousness and spirituality. All his words, from one point of view, read as a commentary upon this central conviction. 'Art, science, and religion', he said once, 'are but three different ways of expressing a single truth. But, in order to understand this, we must have the theory of Advaita.'

The formative influence that went to the determining of his vision may, perhaps, be regarded as threefold. There was, first, his literary education in Sanskrit and English. The contrast between the two worlds thus opened to him carried with it a strong impression of that particular experience which formed the theme of the Indian sacred books. ...

In his Master, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, living and teaching in the temple-garden of Dakshineswar the Swami Vivekananda—'Naren', as he then was—found that verification of the ancient texts which his heart and his reason demanded. Here was the reality which the books only brokenly described. Here was one to whom *samādhi* was a constant mode of knowledge. ... In his Guru, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Vivekananda found the key to life.

Even now, however, the preparation for his own task was not complete. He had yet to wander throughout the length and breadth of India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, mixing with saints and scholars and simple souls alike, learning from all, teaching to all, and living with all, seeing India as she was and is, and so grasping in its comprehensiveness that vast whole, of which his Master's life and personality had been a brief and intense epitome.

These, then—the Śāstras, the Guru, and the Motherland—are the three notes that mingle themselves to form the music of the works of Vivekananda. These are the treasure which it is his to offer. These furnish him with the ingredients whereof he compounds the world's heal-all of his spiritual bounty. These are the three lights burning within that single lamp which India, by his hand, lighted and set up, for guidance of her own children and of the world in the few years of work between September 19, 1893, and July 4, 1902. And some of us there are, who, for the sake of that lighting, and of this record that he has left behind him, bless the land that bore him and the hands of those who sent him forth, and believe that not even yet has it been given to us to understand the vastness and significance of the message that he spoke. ...

In the works of the Swami Vivekananda ... we have what is not only a gospel to the world at large, but also to its own children, the Charter of the Hindu Faith. What Hinduism needed, amidst the general disintegration of the modern era, was a rock where she could lie at anchor, an authoritative utterance in which she might recognize her self. And this was given to her in these words and writings of the Swami Vivekananda.

For the first time in history, as has been said elsewhere, Hinduism itself forms here the subject of generalization of a Hindu mind of the highest order. For ages to come the Hindu man who would verify, the Hindu mother who would teach her children, what was the faith of their ancestors will turn to the pages of these books for assurance and light. Long after the English language has disappeared from India, the gift that has here been made, through that language to the world, will remain and bear its fruit in East and West alike. What Hinduism had needed was the organizing and consolidating of its own idea. What the world had needed was a faith that had no fear of truth. Both these are found here. Nor could any greater proof have been given of the eternal vigour of the Sanātana Dharma, of the fact that India is as great in the present as ever in the past, than this rise of the individual who, at the critical moment, gathers up and voices the communal consciousness.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA : THE MAN AND HIS MESSAGE

BY SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

[Srimat Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj is the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. In this short sketch, he beautifully portrays the personality of Swamiji and tells the message of the great Swami.]

Hundred years ago, in a respectable Hindu home of Calcutta, was born a child who was destined to revolutionize the thought-current of the world. This was Narendranath Datta, afterwards known as Swami Vivekananda. Under the liberal education of his parents, the boy grew into a strong-built youth whose intellectual powers were matched by his moral and aesthetic qualities, all of which made him the idol of his fellows. Gifted from an early age with a high degree of concentration, he showed a marked predilection for religion even while he was in his teens, and was a member of the Brahmo Samaj, the Protestant wing of Hinduism. His favourite question during his college days to anyone credited with particular religious attainments was, 'Sir, have you seen God?' He was long disappointed in his quest, till one day in 1881, he put the same question to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, the Saint of Dakshineswar—a place four miles to the north of Calcutta—and was amazed to get the reply: 'Yes, I see him just as I see you here, only in a much intenser sense.' That was the turning point in Narendranath's life.

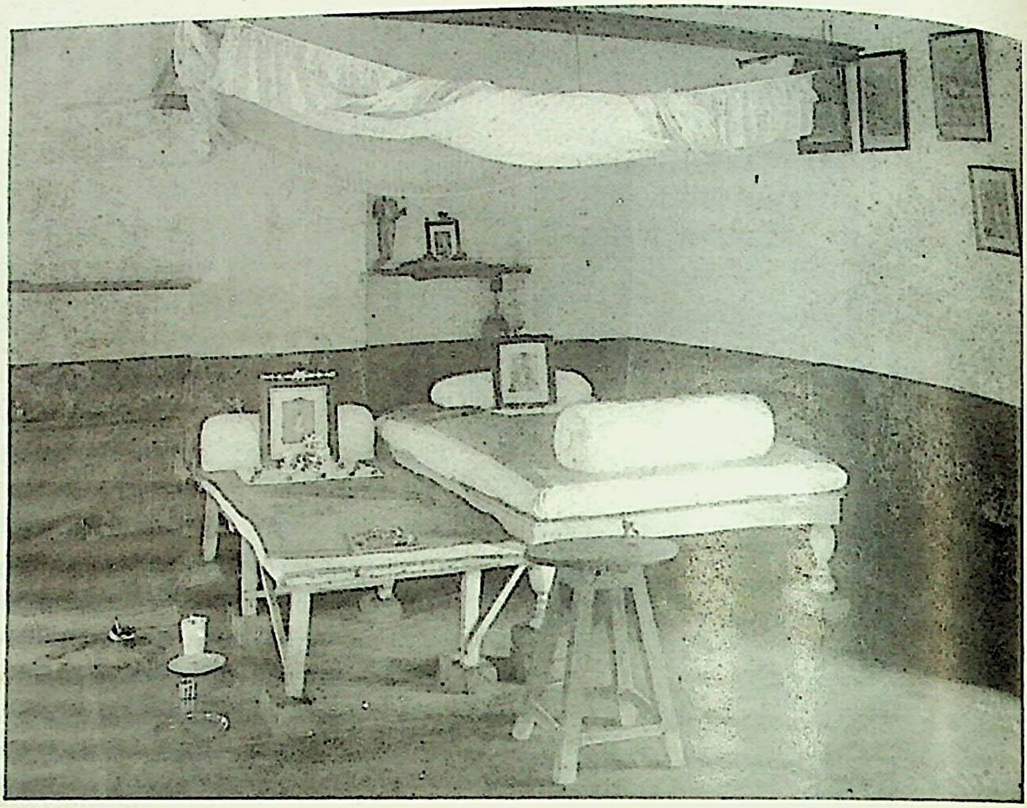
He began to visit Dakshineswar and was more and more struck by the Saint's extraordinary spiritual powers, his frequent complete absorption in God—or *samādhi*, as it is called—his childlike purity, his absolute non-attachment to wealth or possession, his wonderful catholicity of view and capacity of expounding the most abstruse truths in the simplest way, his power of reading a person's mind through and through, and, above all, his superhuman love and compassion. At his touch, Narendra one day almost lost his body consciousness and begged to be restored to the normal state for the sake of his parents, a request which the Saint granted with a smile. No wonder that Narendranath gradually surrendered himself to Sri Ramakrishna.

The Master, as was his wont, fathomed the rare potentialities of his disciple from the very beginning, and accordingly, trained him along the line of least resistance for the highest form of truth, the Advaita, or the absolute oneness of Existence. Narendra, at first, ridiculed the idea of everything being of the essence of God, but he soon came to grasp the truth of this ancient teaching of the Vedas through personal experience. Thus, under the watchful and loving guidance of Sri Ramakrishna, he understood the full import of the teachings of the Hindu scriptures, and accepted all forms of discipline prescribed in them as helpful to particular types of aspirants. Getting over his earlier beliefs as a Brahmo, he realized that God could be with form as well as without form, nay He was unconditioned as well as conditioned.

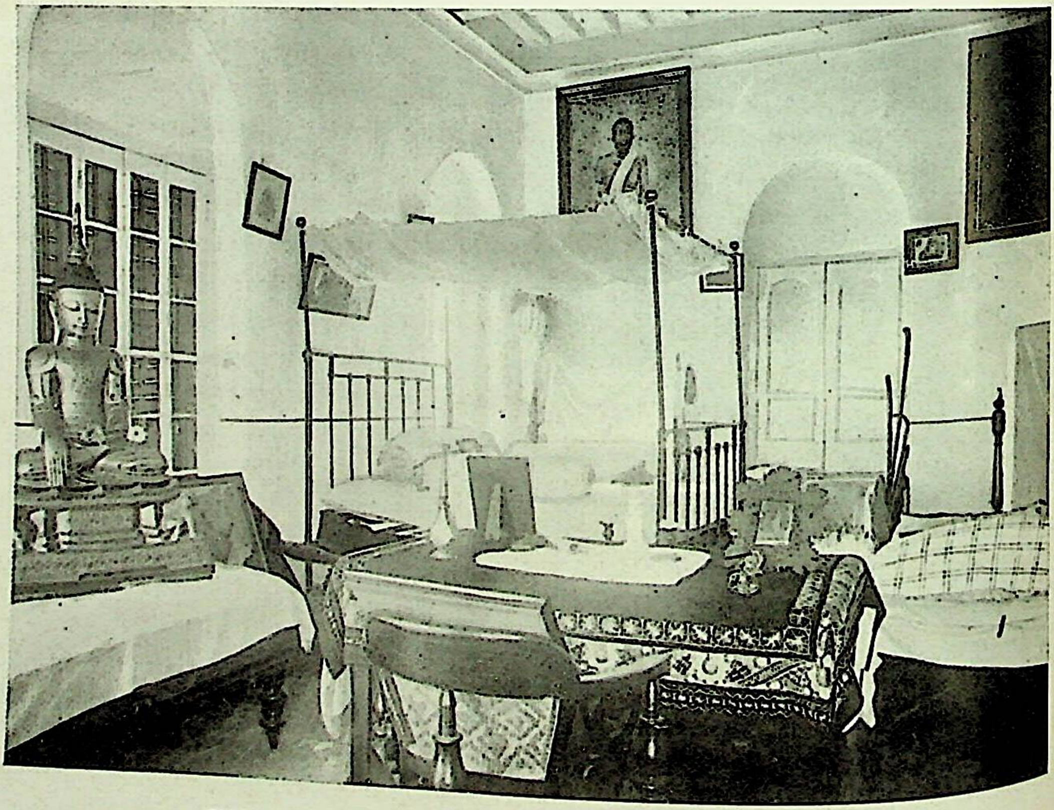
His tutelage lasted till August 1886, when Sri Ramakrishna after a protracted illness gave up his mortal body. The last two years of this period were years of great struggle for him; for shortly before he got his B.A. degree, he suddenly lost his father who died of a heart attack, which left the family in dire poverty. He had to maintain his mother and brothers and sisters, and at the same time, to allay his burning thirst for God-realization. Particularly, during the last year, Sri Ramakrishna's illness required his constant attendance as a nurse. Yet, so great was his spirit of renunciation that he failed to beg material things of the Divine Mother, although he was thrice sent to the Kālī temple for this purpose by the Master.

BHUVANESVARI DEVI

Mother of Swami Vivekananda



SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S ROOM, DAKSHINESWAR



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S ROOM, BELUR MATH

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On Sri Ramakrishna's passing away, Narendra with his brother disciples moved to a dilapidated house at Baranagore, near Calcutta, which was the first monastery of the Ramakrishna Order, founded by him to carry out in everyday life the teachings of the Master. Here, inspired by Narendranath—now a *sannyāsin* under the name of Swami Vivekananda—the monks led a life of great asceticism, combined with a supreme effort for realization. Within two years, he left the monastery to lead a wandering monk's life, which he continued till destiny beckoned him to the distant shores of America in 1893. The intimate knowledge which these five years of travel from the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari gave him of the conditions obtaining in the different strata of Indian life, stood him in good stead when, later, he started the work of regeneration for his motherland.

At the request of some enthusiastic admirers, Swami Vivekananda took upon himself the task of representing Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions, held in connection with the World's Fair at Chicago, U.S.A. Although not equipped with the necessary credentials, he providentially got an opportunity to deliver his message. The ovation which greeted him when he addressed that vast gathering as 'Sisters and Brothers of America', is a matter of common knowledge now. Suffice it to say that this unknown man from India made history for his country that day. There was something in his very appearance that had captivated the audience. His speeches on this occasion touched the inmost core of their hearts by their freshness of approach to the problems of life. During the three years of his stay in that country, he lectured continually from one place to another, and was uniformly appreciated. All homes were thrown open to him. He made numerous friends in respectable circles and had many disciples. His two visits to England were also a great success. In both countries, it was the loftiness of his message, combined with the manner of its presentation, as also his unsullied life, that produced this effect. Although beauty and wealth vied with each other to lure him, he was proof against both, the true child of Sri Ramakrishna that he was. Was it for nothing that the Saint would often go into *samādhi* at the very sight of him?

In the West, Swami Vivekananda preached only those great, life-giving, unifying principles for which Hinduism ever stands. The majesty of the Ātman—the real Self of man—Its transcendence of the chain of birth and death, Its infinite power, Its eternal purity and freedom—these were his themes. Of his great Teacher he spoke only once in public. He did not believe in conversion; he would only ask a Christian to be a better Christian, a Mohammedan to be a better Mohammedan, and so on; for, to him, each great faith was a path unto one and the same God—all roads led to Rome. He never imposed his own will on his listeners, although he felt that he had the power to alter their thoughts if he liked. He wanted everyone to develop along his or her particular line, which was the natural way of growth.

While in America, he kept up correspondence with his Indian disciples and admirers, and encouraged them to work for the uplift of their country. The appalling poverty and ignorance, under which these countless millions of Indians laboured, drew blood from his tender heart. He was determined to do something for them. In fact, this was one of his main reasons for going to America —to get some funds for the Indian work. The first famine relief work of the Ramakrishna Mission, in Rajputana, was initiated at his instance in 1894. Feeling the need of his presence in India, he returned home early in 1897, leaving two of his brother disciples to look after the Vedānta work in the West.

The news of his success as a preacher in America and England having long preceded him, the nation rose as one man to do him honour. From Colombo, where he landed, to Almora in the Himalayas, he received innumerable addresses of welcome, and his replies thereto comprise one of his marvellous series of lectures. Through these, he sought to rouse his countrymen from their age-long lethargy, telling them again and again that the country was living, that spirituality was its soul, and that they must shake off their self-hypnosis to realize the immortal truths which their forefathers had left for them and share them with the rest of the world. This last was India's special mission, and once again, she must carry it out to save the world from the poison of materialism. His prophecy that the whole of the Western world was on a volcano which might burst any day and break it to pieces, has already come true. To save itself, the West, he said, must reconstruct its life on a spiritual foundation, taking a cue from India.

While praising his countrymen for their innate spiritual bent, he called upon them to get rid of their *tamas* or inertia, which they in their ignorance were mistaking for *sattva* or serenity. The two, he said, were as the poles asunder, like pitch darkness and dazzling light, which are similar in their blinding effect. The way to reach *sattva* was through *rajas* or activity. He exhorted all to have burning faith in themselves and struggle for the emancipation of the masses, to give them back their lost individuality. Realizing that the abject poverty and ignorance of the people were mainly responsible for their degraded condition, he tried to set up an organization that would work whole-heartedly in a spirit of service to eradicate them. This was the origin of the Ramakrishna Mission, pledged to carry out the national ideals of renunciation and service. To feed the hungry, clothe the naked, treat the sick, educate the illiterate, comfort the afflicted, in short, in every possible way to help people to help themselves—this was the great task before the country. It was not to be mere social service; it was to be a regular worship of God in the many, irrespective of caste, creed or sex. 'The poor, the illiterate, the downtrodden—let these be your God', he cried. That the country has taken up the idea is a patent fact today. Many organizations have sprung up in India, which are trying to work on similar lines.

The Swami lived only five more years. Incessant labour had undermined his health, and his second trip to the West in 1899, which lasted for a year and a half, failed to restore it. In the course of this, also, he continued his beneficent work of ministration on a somewhat modified scale. Finally, after a short tour in East Bengal and Assam, and further efforts for the consolidation of his work, he burst the bonds of his body at the Belur Math, the headquarters of his organization, on the 4th July 1902. It was the anniversary of the American Independence Day—a day which he loved so much and had even commemorated in a poem. He was barely thirty-nine years of age.

But his life-work is not to be measured by the number of years he lived. His was a dynamic personality, which chafed at the very idea of rest. 'It is better to wear out than rust out', he often said. His desire was to die in the field of battle like a hero, and this he did. On the last day, after meditating in the chapel—behind closed doors, which was an unusual occurrence—for three hours in the morning, he explained a verse from the *Śukla Yajur-Veda* in his original way, and took a class on Pāṇini's Sanskrit grammar for his monks, for about three hours in the afternoon. Sixteen years ago, after he had tasted the bliss of *nirvikalpa-samādhi*, the highest state of mergence in the Supreme Brahman, his Master had said to him: 'Now you know what you are. But the key to this shall be with me, and only when you have finished the Divine Mother's work, will you have it.' Evidently, that condition was fulfilled that evening.

Swami Vivekananda's contribution in the domain of religion was immeasurable. He rejuvenated Hinduism, or Vedānta, as he preferred to call it. Through the help of his

Master, he saw perfect order in the apparent wilderness of its scriptures. 'To put the Hindu ideas into English and then make out of dry philosophy and intricate mythology and queer, startling psychology a religion which shall be easy, simple, popular, and at the same time meet the requirements of the highest minds—is a task only those can understand who have attempted it', he wrote in 1890 to a disciple, and this is just what he accomplished to perfection. He found that, in Hinduism, the approach to the highest truth was psychological. In other words, the different philosophies, such as Dualism, Qualified Monism, and Monism, are presentations of the same truth looked at from different angles according to the temperament and capacity of the aspirant. There is no contradiction among them, just as there is none among the different stages of a man's life. To vary the metaphor, each religion is a language to express the highest truth. We travel not from error to truth, but from truth to truth—at best from lower truth to higher truth. So there is absolutely no need for fanatical quarrels over religion. They are all due to ignorance, and must be treated as a disease. This harmony of all religions was the central theme of his teachings.

The Swami may well be called the maker of modern India. At his galvanic touch the moribund nation has grown self-conscious. The ill effects of centuries of neglect and oppression cannot be removed in a day. But the process of reconstruction has begun, and it is up to the Indians themselves to quicken its pace. The Swami repudiated negative ideas. His was a message of hope and strength. He would not entertain the idea of sin, but call it an error of judgement. Man's potentiality is infinite. A cow never steals nor does a wall tell a lie, but they remain a cow and a wall; man, on the contrary, behaves like a beast or a devil, but he can also realize God if he wants to. All that is necessary for him is to have a sincere determination to reach the goal, no matter what it costs. To hear the Swami proclaim the divinity of man with his characteristic fire was an unforgettable experience. It would resuscitate a dead man!

He believed in giving equal opportunities to all. Or, if there must be difference, let the weaker person have more than the stronger. If a Brāhmaṇa child needed one teacher, let the pariah child have four, for that was equity. He did not denounce hereditary caste. He knew that divisions in society were natural and inevitable. Only they changed forms in different countries. The caste system in India was introduced mainly to keep out competition, and it was never altogether rigid. Rather our forefathers aimed at levelling up—raising all by slow stages to the status of a Brāhmaṇa, who was the custodian of the national culture. According to the Swami, this has again to be done, under the guidance of new *ṛṣis* or seers of truth, who would be born from time to time and produce new Smṛtis or law-codes. In India, it is the Śrutis or Upaniṣads which are held to be unchanging, but not the Smṛtis, which are adaptations of the principles of the Upaniṣads to the changing conditions of particular ages. That Swami Vivekananda himself was such a *ṛṣi*, we may conclude, not on the authority of his great Teacher alone, but also in view of the Swami's deep insight into the heart of things and his all-comprehensive vision extending far into the future.

Unlike Kipling, the Swami visualized a much-needed union between the East and the West, to be effected by a judicious exchange of Indian spirituality with Western materialistic knowledge. Mere material greatness without a fundamental spiritual outlook that would comprehend the entire human race as one brotherhood, is bound to lead to wars even worse than the last one. Similarly, the spiritual greatness of only a handful of persons to the exclusion of countless millions who are grovelling in misery, cannot but spell disaster for any country. Indians should first and foremost try to be truly religious, not simply by observing certain rituals nor by giving intellectual assent to certain dogmas, but by realizing the great truths of their scriptures—by actually being and becoming. Keeping this as their ideal, they should, as a step to it, supply those vital needs of the body and mind without which spiritual progress is impossible for the general mass of people. It may take time to do this, but it must be done with all earnestness, through an intelligent organized effort in a spirit of mutual helpfulness and utter absence of jealousy.

The Swami was an advocate of the enfranchisement of Indian women, and regarded the downfall of the country as partly due to their degraded position in society. Citing Manu's well-known dictum, 'The gods are pleased where the women are happy', he strongly pleaded for their equal partnership with men. A bird with only one wing cannot fly, he used to say. But this uplift must be on strictly national lines, after the model of Sitā and Sāvitrī, and not in imitation of Western standards, for it would be suicidal. Maintaining their traditional purity to the full, Indian women must acquire practicality in the different fields of life. The Swami was an ardent believer in the magical power of education of the right type. It was, in a sense, his panacea for most of the evils of society. Given proper education, Indian women would solve their own problems.

Swami Vivekananda was an embodiment of the Advaita philosophy that he preached. He was a breaker of bondage *par excellence*. Believing in the omnipotence of the Spirit, he wanted to see it applied in every sphere of life, so that an all-round development might result. All that was necessary was to supply the deficiencies, and the best way to do this was by removing the barriers. Then the infinite potentialities of the Soul would automatically manifest themselves. He was a living example of the multi-sided development to which a man could aspire. The readers of his works cannot fail to be struck by his scholarship and depth of thought, his synthetic vision, his aesthetic sense and humour, his eloquence and power of expression both as a speaker and a writer, his glowing patriotism and love of humanity at large, and, above all, his saintliness and hold on the Reality. He was also a skilled musician with a magnificent voice, whose devotional songs repeatedly threw Śri Ramakrishna into states of *samādhi*. No wonder that people adored him in both hemispheres. But, in spite of superhuman honours bestowed on him by thousands of men and women, he was unassuming as a child, and sincerely attributed whatever virtues he possessed to the unbounded grace of his Master. He wanted to be just 'a voice without a form'. Here truly was a case of '*āścaryo vaktā kuśalo'sya labdhā*—Wonderful is the expounder of truth and talented its recipient'.

In his life as well as works, we have an endless storehouse of materials to enlighten and uplift us. Let us delve into them again and again, and assimilate what comes to our hands, with purity, patience, and perseverance. Our labours will not go unrewarded. I conclude this short sketch with the Swami's beautiful summing up of what religion means: 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this Divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy—by one or more or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms are but secondary details.'

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND YOUNG INDIA

BY DR. SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN

[The present article, reproduced from an earlier issue of *Prabuddha Bharata*, is from the reports of a speech delivered by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, at a public meeting in Calcutta, in the early forties. What he said about twenty years ago holds good even today. His sane advice deserves our serious contemplation and calls for a re-orientation of our outlook on life.]

When I was a student in the early years of this century, a student in high school and college classes, we used to read Swami Vivekananda's speeches and letters which were then passing from hand to hand in manuscript form, and they used to stir us a great deal and make us feel proud of our ancient culture. Though our externals were broken down, the spirit of our country is there and is everlastingly real—that was the message which we gathered from his speeches and writings when I was a young student.

But today we can see a growing tendency among our young men and women to think that all those things are out of date, that they have betrayed us, and that we should turn to copying another kind of civilization. We may possess Indian bodies, but we must borrow other souls to inhabit them. I should like to ask you whether you are so much satisfied with the high-pressure machine civilization that has led us to this appalling tragedy in which we are today. I am asking you to consider whether a civilization such as ours today has not outreached itself; whether a civilization like this where man is able to ride the air and swim the seas but has to cover his face and hide underground, a civilization where young people from the beginning, from their nurseries and kindergarten, are taught to develop a spirit of hatred, whether a civilization where women cry out from the depth of their hearts, 'Blessed is the womb that is bare and blessed the breast which never gave a suck', whether a civilization that has landed us in this kind of crisis and catastrophe can be regarded as fundamentally sound and worth copying by us. That is the question which I wish to put to you. I want you to ask yourselves whether this civilization that has brought the world to the present position is fundamentally sound, propping itself on foundations which can be regarded as just and righteous. Whenever you talk of civilization, it is no use your talking of economic arrangements, political forms, scientific technique and equipment. Civilization is a movement of the spirit. And you ask what is the spiritual essence, what is the nerve principle, that vital spark which has made all this civilization thrive.

We have our political democracy, we have the appearances of great sportsmanship, we have also the appearances of being truly religious people. But it is a civilization which centres round banks, factories, corporations, companies, and enterprises of individual men who want to make themselves wealthy and luxurious at the expense and degradation of many people. That is what civilization actually stands for. We talk about religion. Well, I tell you that civilization, though it may be seemingly religious, is essentially a secular one, is essentially a materialistic one. So if this is civilization is secular, and its outlook ultimately materialistic, where man finds himself dressed with brief little authority, plays all these tricks which have brought us to this condition, you must ask whether it is not necessary to bring about a different kind of civilization which does not rest on mere secularism, which dethrones materialism and where profit motive gives place to what you consider service of fellow men.

The question is 'What is man?' Is he a crawling earthworm? Or, is he the most cunning of all animals, or is he an economic being controlled by the laws of supply and demand, or is he, as Swami Vivekananda said, an 'Ātman,' a universal spirit? However dense, however obstinate, however depraved a human being may be, there is that essential divine spark in him that can never be surrendered. Are there not moments in each one of your lives which redeem you from the actual commonplace existence, moments when you feel you do not walk on solid earth but float in thin air, moments when life seems as still as death, moments when you are in communion with fundamental spiritual Reality, when, indeed, life and death seem merely but two shadows? Is it not a fact that each one of us is able at some time or other of his life to feel the triteness, the unworthy pettiness of the pleasures of life and possessions of the earth, and feel there are certain eternal values which are permanent, which cannot be superseded by the passing insanities of this world? If Swami Vivekananda stood out for such a kind of doctrine, if he has made an appeal to us to realize that a human being is not to be regarded as an earthworm, or an economic being, or a political creature, but that he has an inner citadel, a sanctuary of his soul which cannot be penetrated by anything external, and that inner sanctuary of his will have to be preserved against attacks of economics and politics, is he not standing up for spiritual equality for the whole of humanity? That is the gospel for which Swami Vivekananda stood and that has saved India until the present moment, and that is the gospel to which we have been disloyal. If we are where we are, it is not because we have clung to our ideals, but it is because we have not been sufficiently loyal to the great ideals which have come down to us.

There is nothing higher than humanity. But so far as we are concerned, a human individual is a lamp of Spirit on earth, the most concrete living embodiment of Spirit. We do not know the transcendental Spirit. If you want to know, however, the Spirit incarnated, you have to meet a brother man, a man who requires most assistance from you, not the man who is hale and healthy, but one who is poor, who is afflicted, and who is in distressed circumstances. This is the appeal of every great saint so far as human service is concerned. That is the appeal which you have to stand for. There are people who say we are contemplative and that we are not sufficiently practical. But that must be regarded as something which is not corroborated by any of our great writings or lives of great personalities. You cannot think of more dynamic personalities in this country than those religious geniuses who have stirred us to incarnate the high ideals of spirit. Buddha, Śaṅkara, and the Gītācārya, all these are people who not only dwelt on mountain heights, but returned to the service of ordinary men, came back to the plane of history. If moments of contemplation are necessary to make us firm in this attitude, moments of action are equally necessary to put those ideals to practical service. By standing up for the great ideals of Hindu religion, the great ideals which alone can save humanity, by standing up for them, Swami Vivekananda tried to lead humanity to a nobler and better path than that which it found itself in.

Whatever may be your social programme, whatever revolutions you may bring about in the economic and political world, unless you have the dynamic inspiration of religion, you will never succeed in this enterprise. Even if you are radically minded, ask yourself the question whether you are going to reduce human beings to mere political or social creatures, or would you give him some inner sanctity which nothing outward can touch? If you really believe in the divine spark in man, do not for a moment hesitate to accept the great tradition which has come to us, of which Swami Vivekananda was the greatest exponent.

VIVEKANANDA: UNIQUE SEER AND SAINT

By Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar

[Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, renowned scholar and noted author of many valuable books, is at present the Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai University. In this short and beautiful biographical sketch, he portrays the personality of Swami Vivekananda and tells about his valuable contributions.]

Narendranath Dutt, who became a world figure under his *sannyāsin* name of Swami Vivekananda, was endowed by nature with restless energy, and he had, as a young man, all the fiery passions that normally co-exist with bodily strength and determination. From his student days, Narendra personified the conflict of the past and the present, of the East and the West, and of dream and action. He was possessed by two apparently irreconcilable desires, one for conquest and the other for renunciation and compassion. Even before he came under the influence of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, he strove to embody in his life the motto of Saint Augustine of Hippo, who asserted: 'If you want to find God, serve man.' After a period of varied study and of grappling with sceptic and agnostic trends of thought, Narendra had the good fortune of being marked out as the chosen *śiṣya* of the Paramahamsa who brought the realization of *samādhi* to him and literally conquered him by spiritual force.

Very soon, the disciple appreciated the message of his Guru, namely, that of the universality of the Supreme, of the essential oneness of the various religions of the world, and of the duty to serve man in order to reach God.

After his novitiate, Swami Vivekananda travelled through the whole subcontinent of India as a *parivrājaka* and apprehended the spiritual unity of India. As an ardent and discerning student of Western classics and philosophy, he was filled with a desire to reconcile and to assimilate Hindu ideals with modern scientific processes and speculation.

Travelling incognito through India, he lived one day with a prince and another day with a wandering beggar. He carried with him in his travels both Thomas A'Kempis's *Imitation of Christ* and the *Gītā*; and standing on the land's end at Kanya Kumari, he had the vision of the renaissance of India, of its uplift from misery and poverty, and of the need to reveal India to the West and the West to India. It was in April 1891, during a musical performance given by a dancer in the palace of the Raja of Khetri, that—in his own words—his spiritual pride was quelled when he desired to leave the place as a protest against the presence of a dancing girl who sang a devotional melody which conquered the Swamiji with its uplifting appeal. Thereafter, he made no difference between man and man, and lived with no difference, with nobleman as well as thieves and sweepers.

It was at Porbandar that the advice was given to him to visit the West; and when he swam to the Kanya Kumari rock from the mainland (he could not afford even the boat fare), he, after deep deliberation, was convinced of the need to go abroad. And it was as a person without any resources that he resolved to proceed to Chicago. Madras furnished his first group of disciples and his supporters, and it was due to some far-sighted philanthropists that it became possible for the Swamiji to sail for America. He decided, then and there, that the search for personal salvation was secondary and that his duty was to preach the spiritual unity of Asia and the message of Asian thought and philosophy to the world. September 1893 saw his spiritual conquest of the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, and he carried the whole Conference with him when he proudly affirmed the immemorial teachings of the Upaniṣads and the place occupied by the *sannyāsin* and the monk in the spiritual and secular polity of Eastern countries.

The Swami's prolonged lecture tours in America and in England have been adequately described by his loving disciples. America eagerly accepted his teachings and, in a way, was prepared for them by the work of Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman. The message of identity had been preached by these American men of genius and Swami Vivekananda saw a fertile soil for his talks and writings. He enunciated the doctrine of social philanthropy and service to the low and he emphasized that India's doom was sealed when the word *mleccha* was invented.

Margaret Noble (who afterwards became Sister Nivedita), Sister Christine, and Sister Haridasi were among his early disciples, and the Swami dictated his *Raja Yoga* to Sister Haridasi; and later on, Mr. Goodwin became his secretary. For over a year, he travelled through many Western countries, stressing the need for tolerance and the religion of universality. He met in Europe the great savants, Max Müller and Paul Deussen, who became his fast friends and supporters. His visit to Switzerland gave him the idea of the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama, and his contact with Edward Carpenter and Frederick Myers made him acquainted with the newly arisen spiritual cravings of Europe.

Returning to India, Swami Vivekananda made up his mind not to have any political affiliations and he often repeated that he would unhesitatingly keep his movement pure and untouched by passing controversies. He made a memorable speech in Colombo, where he insisted that Śiva should be worshipped by service to the poor, to the diseased and the weak.

In Madras, he helped to start the *Brahmavadin* and his Madras speeches were practically the summation of his fierce resistance to outworn caste prejudices and incrustations. He preached in his lecture on 'My Plan of Campaign' that, whilst England had political vitality and power, and Italy and France were intrinsically artistic, in India, religious life is the centre of existence, but that, in order to realize that life, we must re-create for ourselves a man-making religion and a man-making education. He, thereafter, began to embody his ideals by founding various *āśramas* and *maṭhas* as well as educational institutions and hostels. In the midst of his incessant work, he was dictating his masterpieces on the four Yogas and on the teachings of the Upaniṣads, the Epics, and Purāṇas, and he composed hymns and significant poems like his 'Kali the Mother'. The Advaita Ashrama was founded at Mayavati, in Almora district, and the Belur Math was consecrated in 1898.

The Swami paid a second visit to the West, but by that time, his health had begun to fail. He rallied his powers and made a great speech in the Paris Congress of the History of Religions. But his second Western trip over-taxed his physical powers and he died in July 1902 while not yet 40 years of age.

Spiritual freedom and fearlessness, equilibrium and synthesis were the watchwords of his revelation to India, and to him, to know and to do were synonymous. Summing up Swami Vivekananda's contributions, they may be described as the organizing and the consolidation of Hindu ideals and the insistence that Hinduism had, and should have, no fear of the truth. There is, according to him, in reality, no difference between the sacred and the secular. Every aspect of life is and should be made a part of religion, and man becomes divine by realizing the divine in every aspect of the universe and of life's activities. Finally, like his *Guru*, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, he constantly insisted that, by the expression 'Iṣṭadevatā' was meant that each man may seek God in his own way, provided he is sincere and tolerant.

THE MESSAGE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: A RETHINKING

By Swami Pavitrananda

[Swami Pavitrananda, formerly an editor of *Prabuddha Bharata*, is at present the head of the Vedanta Society of New York. In this learned and thought-provoking article, he has clearly brought out the message that Swami Vivekananda has left for his own countrymen and for humanity at large.]

It is one hundred years since Swami Vivekananda was born, and it is sixty-one years since he passed away, leaving behind a great message and the example of a great life. The Swami, affectionately known as Swamiji by thousands of devotees, was a manifold personality—a spiritual giant, who, not satisfied with his own unfoldment, intensely strove for the good of all. He had a very compassionate heart which keenly felt for the suffering of the whole of humanity. He was a great monk who renounced everything, but his love for his motherland, India, did not leave him at any time. As such, he spoke for the salvation of India, for the removal of the misery of the world, and above all, how every human being could get the knowledge of his divinity. Swamiji's message was, therefore, not for one time, but for all times—not for one country, but for all countries, not for one aspect of human life, but for all aspects of human existence.

It is doubtful whether the world has seen a second soul like him who felt, thought, and worked so hard for the good of humanity. Swamiji had this great advantage—he lived in modern times when the world is being more and more knit together, when no country, nation, or man can live in proud or despised isolation. The one sure mark of a spiritual man is that his love embraces all, irrespective of colour, creed, and geographical area. Being a highly developed spiritual soul, Swami Vivekananda became identified with the whole world.

In previous eras, one's conception of the 'whole world' was limited; knowledge of one country about another was not so great. With the progress of science, time and space have shrunk, and the horizon of human knowledge has widened more and more. Though Swamiji lived in the last century (having touched only the fringe of the present century), he had a clear glimpse of what was ahead for the world, and therefore, his thoughts and feelings were in terms of the problems with which we are faced today and which we will be facing tomorrow. During his lifetime, the pressing problems were of one kind. Though fundamental problems are always the same, our immediate problems are of a different kind. On the occasion of the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda, we should attempt to discover how his living words relate to our present and future. In other words, we have to imagine what he would say to us today if we could hear his physical voice.

During his time, Swamiji found India under the yoke of foreign rule, a very sad victim of economic exploitation, losing faith in her own culture and civilization, her soul almost on the point of extinction, without any hope of regeneration, as it were. Nobody could imagine that India could ever be independent, even in the distant future. There was darkness all around. No ray of light was visible anywhere. Versed in Indian history and Sanskrit lore, three thousand years of India's past was with him a living reality before his very eyes, which could never be dimmed, though the existing condition of India was very abject. A man of God, religion with him was not a matter of aspiration or striving, but a realization, a direct experience. A disciple of Sri Ramakrishna who lived the harmony of all religions in his own life, it was spontaneous for Swamiji to see the same basic truths in all religions. As a wandering monk he roamed over all India from the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari and saw the people—the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the so-called educated and the supposedly illiterate; he realized their strength and knew their weakness, but, above all, he was sorely moved by the poverty and misery of the masses. His compassionate heart bled for them. For a time, this suffering of the masses in India was the foremost thought in his mind. It is hardly any exaggeration to say that nobody knew India in the way Swami Vivekananda did. He was frankly proud of India's glorious past, he was sure of India's bright future, but the present condition of India made him miserable. He writhed in agony at the sight of the miseries of the people of India. In such a mood, he told his countrymen in the year 1897: 'For the next fifty years, this alone shall be our key-note—this, our great Mother India. Let all other vain gods disappear for that time from our minds. This is the only god that is awake. ... All other gods are sleeping.'[1] Without depending on the foreign rulers, he exhorted the people to stir themselves to the task of removing poverty, spreading education, nullifying social injustices, and so on. Thus the patriot in Swami Vivekananda came out more prominent than the monk in him.

India was in an abject condition. When a country is in such misery, it becomes weak. Where could the needed strength be obtained? That was the crux of the problem. The solution only Swamiji could give. He said that the soul of India was religion, and if that could be touched, India would awaken. He made a clear distinction between social customs and real religion. Real religion is quite different from social usages and practices and malpractices. Make religion living, and India will rise—India that was like a sleeping leviathan will awaken. Religion is in the very blood of the whole nation; everything should be done through the living inspiration of religion.

Later events have indicated how the great seer Swami Vivekananda was absolutely right. Within fifty years of his passing, India rose and shook off the foreign yoke, and in this matter religion played a great part. Truth and non-violence were the weapons with which Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of the political movement, fought. Achieving independence in this way is a landmark in the history of India and a great event in the history of the world.

As regards the relation between India and the world, Swami Vivekananda was of the opinion that India will supply spiritual sustenance to the whole world. 'Shall India die?' wrote the Swami from America after having some personal experience of conditions in the West, 'Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct, all moral perfection will be extinct, all sweet-souled sympathy for religion will be extinct, all ideality will be extinct, and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest, fraud, force, and competition its ceremonies, and the human soul its sacrifice.'[2] Swamiji was quite definite on this point. He himself answered the sceptics when he said that this was not merely 'a manifestation of patriotic impulses'. The trend of events supported this assertion.

In India, a large number of persons are drawn to Swamiji because of his great love for his country. He is called a 'patriot-saint'. To them, his lectures from Colombo to Almora and his fiery letters asking people to dedicate their lives to the cause of India contain the essence of his message. To them, he was more an awakener of India than an awakener of souls.

To the devotees, followers, and admirers of Swamiji who belong to the countries outside India, the story is different. To them his message to India, however significant, is only a fraction of his whole message contained in his quite voluminous speeches and writings. They love, admire, and worship this great soul because of his spiritual message. They love the Swami Vivekananda who declared in a trumpet voice: 'Ye divinities on earth, it is a sin to call man a sinner.' 'Each soul is divine.' 'Man, the infinite dreamer, dreaming finite dreams.' They admire and turn to Swamiji, because his spiritual message of strength, hope, and courage opens up new vistas to them.

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[1] *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, 4th edition, Vol. III, p. 300.

[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 294.

When Swami Vivekananda came to America, he was extremely happy to see the material prosperity of the country brought about by scientific development, the power of organization, and great opportunities for growth available to the poorest and the lowliest. Coming from India, he was greatly impressed by the freedom of movement, thought, and activities which the American women enjoyed. He said that America was a land of opportunity; it was a country for women and the masses. He thought America and India could benefit much from each other—India's spiritual idealism and America's material achievements, combined, would bring about a new era in the world.

America represented the height of material achievement in the Western countries. What was true of America was true, more or less, of almost all Western countries and civilizations. But it was not long before he was disillusioned about the real worth of material prosperity bereft of high spiritual purpose. The social life in the West was a peal of laughter on the surface, but underneath it was a long-drawn wail. He was extremely pained at this situation. 'The world is burning with great misery,' he wrote to one of his Western disciples from America, 'can you sleep?' 'Religions of the world have become lifeless mockeries. What the world wants is character. The world is in need of those whose life is one burning love, selfless. That love will make every word tell like thunderbolt.'[3] At another time, he said: 'The whole of the Western world rests on a volcano which may burst at any moment and destroy the whole world.' He uttered these words toward the close of the last century. At the present time, to our great dismay, we see how right he was, how every syllable of what he said was true.

What is the remedy against this impending catastrophe? His idea was that, unless men are of a better type and unless their lives are rooted in spiritual idealism, no amount of material achievement will bring peace and happiness to mankind or make the world safe for human habitation.

The value and utility of religion have been repeated time and again from the pulpit and the press till words like 'religion' and 'God' have become meaningless to many. Some will not even care to listen to such words. Swami Vivekananda, however, gave a new meaning and interpretation to religion. Whatever makes you strong is religion and whatever makes you weak is irreligion. Whatever makes you bold and courageous is religion, whatever makes you fear is irreligion. If there is any sin, it is only to fear. To fear is a great sin. These were not merely words of exhortation by a mob orator. The great Swami uttered them from his deep spiritual experience. Real religion is the realization of the Divine within by every soul. That Divinity is latent within each one of us; religious practices only bring it to our conscious level. When one has realized one's Divinity as a direct experience one has no fear of anything, not even death itself. Such a man will not compromise with truth for any self-interest or from any kind of fear. Such a man will not have any hatred or ill-feeling against anyone. He will not have any competition with any of his neighbours. Such a man has solved all his personal problems, reached the goal of life, and will bring peace, happiness, and strength to others. A handful of such persons are sufficient to change the face of the earth.

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[3] *Ibid.*, 2nd edition, Vol. VII, p. 432.

In a ringing voice Swamiji said in a lecture in London: 'What the world wants today is twenty men and women who can dare to stand in the street yonder and say that they possess nothing but God. ... If this is true, what else could matter? If it is not true, what do our lives matter?'[4] In another context, he said: 'Let there be a dozen lion-souls in each country, lions who have broken their own bonds, who have touched the Infinite, whose soul is gone to Brahman, who care nothing for wealth, nor power, nor fame, and these will be enough to shake the world.'

Swamiji himself was a bright example of what he said. In the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, by one lecture he became world famous—literally overnight an unknown wandering monk became the man of the hour. What was it due to? It was neither his oft-mentioned prepossessing personal appearance, his admittedly great intellect and erudition, nor the combination of all these, which worked the miracle. It was his spiritual realization and knowledge of the Divine within which made him so powerful and irresistible.

'This infinite power of the Spirit, brought to bear upon matter, evolves material development; made to act upon thought, evolves intellectuality; and made to act upon Itself, makes of man a God', wrote the Swami in his reply to the Madras Address. He himself was the illustration of how one could become divine by knowing the Divine and wield overriding power and influence. His ideal was 'to preach unto mankind their divinity and teach them how to manifest that in every moment of their lives'. 'First let us be Gods and then help others to be Gods. "Be and make." Let this be our motto', he wrote. 'Say not man is a sinner. Tell him that he is a God. Even if there were a devil, it would be our duty to remember God always, and not the devil. If the room is dark, the constant feeling and repeating of darkness will not take it away, but bring in the light. ... Let us say, "We are" and "God is" and "We are God", "Śivo'ham, Śivo'ham", and march on. Not matter but Spirit. ... This is the eternal truth the Śrutis preach. ... Let the lion of Vedānta roar. ... Throw the ideas broadcast, and let the result take care of itself.'[5]

Swami Vivekananda had the experience of what is called *samādhi* or the superconscious state. He had knowledge of the modern thoughts of the world. He translated the superconscious into the language of the moderns. As such, his words were both virile and modern. His rationalism was, at times, disturbing, if not frightening, to the orthodox and the conservative. But nobody could take offence at him. For he spoke the truth. No wonder he had a tremendous appeal to a large number of virile, thoughtful Western minds.

If Swamiji's words were fiery, his personality was almost overwhelming. Those who came into personal contact with him found in him a gentle soul whose calm influence soothed their lacerated hearts, brought peace to the chaotic condition of their minds, and gave strength to their drooping spirits. It seemed like magic, but he did not exercise any magic. He rejected psychic powers even when they were offered him by his own Master. He was so serene and had so much inner peace and strength that anybody coming within his orbit could not but feel their touch. Swami Vivekananda, who spoke of self-confidence as the first condition of growth in spiritual life, was a perfect example of self-effacement. One old lady who knew him, when asked what was her impression, said that she felt in his presence here was a man who had no self at all. Those who knew Swamiji invariably felt that he was much greater than his words however important and far-reaching in their influence they were.

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[4] Sister Nivedita, *The Master as I Saw Him*, p. 26.

[5] *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, 4th edition, Vol. IV, p. 297.

This happened both in India and the West. Only in India, the immediate impact of his words and personality on large numbers of people was patriotic and humanitarian, bringing about a national awakening. His spiritual influence, though deeper and much more significant, intense, and concentrated, was limited to a fewer number of souls. In the West, however, his influence was purely spiritual. The actual needs in the two hemispheres were different.

In this nuclear era, when the very feeling of distance is fading away, an altogether new situation has arisen. A statement like 'India and Abroad' no longer holds true. No country is separate from another, however distant they were before. The time has, therefore, come when we should study the message of Swamiji not in terms of India and outside India, or the East and the West, but in relation to the world as a whole. The treasures of the East are the treasures of the West, the power of the West is the power of the East. It is not communism. It is common sense. We live together, or we die together, *literally*. No one can help it.

In the West, Swamiji spoke mainly of spiritual problems, whereas the same message in India was coloured with the thought of her practical needs. Nevertheless, his admirers and followers all the world over look to their counterparts in India for help and guidance, because the message originated in India, and they think the message in its pristine purity and strength will be found only in India. As such, it is a tremendous responsibility on his followers in India—monastic and lay. The message of a great spiritual soul like Swami Vivekananda works from within, because of its own innate power and strength. But still, from the human standpoint, future history will judge how those, in whose keeping that message was entrusted, acted, behaved, and dealt with that message. So, this is a tremendous responsibility, much more tremendous than we can imagine.

Swamiji would say that we can render three kinds of help to people—material, intellectual, and spiritual. We can give food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, medicine to the sick; that is material help. To solve the economic problems and arrange for the medical care of the people is of the first and foremost importance for a nation or a race to exist or live a life worth the name. Then comes the need for education. People must have good education. Without proper education or the capacity to think or develop the intellect, one cannot raise oneself above the animal level of existence. Animals cannot think, cannot distinguish between right and wrong, or direct their lives other than by instinct. Men can. That is what differentiates a man from an animal. So, after the problems of physical existence have been solved, for the survival of a nation, education of the people is supremely necessary. But, even with intellectual development, man rarely can follow what is right or what he knows to be right. Man, often helplessly, does what he knows to be wrong or cannot do what he knows to be right. That is why even highly distinguished scholars and philosophers sometimes live ignoble lives—lives not superior to those of lower beings. To be able to do what one knows to be right requires inner strength or spiritual development. Without spiritual development, a man's life is like a boat without any rudder. Such a man, often, wrecks his life, in spite of having much in the way of material possessions or intellectual acumen. The present world situation sadly indicates how dangerous man can be to himself, with great power in his possession but with no capacity to control that power. We live in a world where nations are behaving like frenzied creatures, engaged in acts of savagery, unknown even amongst animals. The alternatives now before the world are the complete destruction of the entire human race or the great powers coming to their senses. Nations behave madly because the people that comprise the nations have no spiritual strength. Their leaders fully know that they are leading the world to complete destruction, but they do not see any practical remedy. Blind to their own follies, they seek justification for inhuman deeds by blaming others for their own faults. That is a vicious circle, going round and round, and few are conscious of the fact that, at the centre of this circle, is the fundamental problem that man is not the master of his own mind. Man has a mind, but, instead of his controlling the mind, the mind controls him, like a wild horse driving his master, the rider. Man is helpless.

This is not a material problem, nor one which intellectual power can solve. It is, essentially, a spiritual problem—of knowing the mind or acquiring mastery over the mind. From this it can easily be seen that material help, however vital that may be, intellectual help, however important that is, are not by themselves panaceas for the ills of life. Without spiritual strength, life is not worth living, or as a practical proposition in the present age, life cannot go on. Hence Swamiji said that the solution of material as well as intellectual problems should be on a spiritual basis or with an eye to spiritual development. Otherwise, the solutions will defeat their own purposes. The present trend of affairs in the world is a stern reminder of this great truth.

Under foreign rule, India suffered from innumerable handicaps for free growth and expression. Now these handicaps are over. India is desperately trying to develop her material resources, remove poverty, spread education, and improve the health of the nation. Within a short time after independence, success in these efforts has been great and very encouraging. Nevertheless, this is just the time when India should be cautious that she does not ape and become a mere replica of the West. In that case, India will become false to herself and lose her soul. India now stands at the cross-roads. Now is the time to make a decision. A wrong decision made now will spell disaster to future India. In this respect, the message of Swamiji will be of tremendous help.

It is not that India should be a theocratic state, or that religion should be forced on all and sundry. All do not need religion. Everyone does not have spiritual interest. Religion cannot be given in advance. Many want bread instead of religion. Give them bread. Many have their interest and delight in intellectual pursuits, they are completely satisfied with them. They have no hunger for spiritual verities. Give them directions suited to their situation. Raise them step by step to higher levels of understanding. But at the apex there must be the highest ideal—the knowledge of the meaning of life. In every country, there must be at least a few persons who have known and realized or who strive intensely for the highest ideal. Even a few such individuals will raise the level of thought and culture of that country. Their influence will filter down to the masses, and in a natural and spontaneous way, colour their outlook. The masses may not immediately live for the highest ideal, but they will have appreciation for it. That is not a small gain. Swami Vivekananda wanted the leaders of thought in India to be highly spiritual persons. But spiritual souls do not come out of the blue; they are the outcome of long and persistent efforts. Those on whom has fallen the task and burden of leading the country should remember this very strongly.

Swamiji's message was mainly spiritual. If he spoke of other things, they were simply as steps to the highest goal. The source of his strength was his spiritual realization, and the impulse of his intense activities came from his great compassion for the suffering. His mind soared to the highest, and his heart felt for the whole world.

'I am the servant of that God whom the ignorant call Man', he wrote in one of his letters. To him, every life was the manifestation of the Divine. If he strongly exhorted Indians and his followers everywhere to dedicate their lives for the welfare of others, it was because he saw, and therefore asked them to serve, God in man. That attitude is sure to purify all work, and make the workers unconsciously spiritual. And the result will be peace instead of conflict, joy in place of frustration.

To keep that attitude always in mind requires an iron will, a dogged determination, eternal vigilance, and great enthusiasm for the Ideal. This is a challenge which all lovers of Swami Vivekananda will have to take up not only for the sake of India, but for the survival of the human race.

The preachers of truth are very few, but their powers are felt by those who happen to come within the atmosphere of their divine personality. Such a preacher of truth occasionally appears like a gigantic comet above the horizon, dazzling the eyes and filling the hearts of ordinary mortals with wonder and admiration, and silently passes away into the invisible and unknown realms of the universe. The late Swami Vivekananda was one of those great comets who appeared in the spiritual firmament, once perhaps after several centuries. A well-known writer of this city wrote the other day: 'The passing of Swami Vivekananda was like the flashing mighty star upon our wondering eyes. For in truth, no greater, wiser, truer, holier soul has ever dwelt among us than this marvellous man who has recently gone into spirit life.' ...

No country has ever produced such a many-sided character harmoniously combined in one form as we have seen in the late Swami Vivekananda. ... Poverty, self-abnegation, self-renunciation, and disinterested love for humanity were the ornaments of this exemplary character. ... I had the honour of living with this great Swami in India, in England, and in this country (U.S.A.). I lived and travelled with this great spiritual brother of mine, saw him day after day and night after night and watched his character for nearly twenty years, and I stand here to assure you that I have not found another like him in these three continents, and that no one can take the place of this wonderful personage. As a man, his character was pure and spotless; as a philosopher, he was the greatest of all Eastern and Western philosophers. In him I found the ideal of *karma-yoga, bhakti-yoga, rāja-yoga,* and *jñāna-yoga*; he was like the living example of Vedānta in all its different branches. ...

Many have asked me why so great and good a man must die. I have said: Why should he not die? His task was finished. One ordinary human body was not enough, nor twenty, nor a hundred for such tremendous energy. Such an intense intellect and spirituality would soon dissolve the granite foundation stones.

Vivekananda is not dead, he is with us, now and for ever. He is my comfort and solace. He is the Senior Brother to the whole world.

Swami Abhedananda

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

By Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit

[Srimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit is the Governor of Maharashtra. The following is the report of a speech she delivered at New York while she was the Ambassador of India in the United States.]

One of the makers of modern India, Vivekananda represented the finest flowering of the Indian renaissance movement which started with Ram Mohan Roy in early nineteenth century. The principal objectives of this movement were the spiritual and social regeneration of India. Centuries of political subjection had degraded Indian society. Religion had degenerated into dogmas and the practice of rituals. Social life had become stagnant. For a time, it appeared as if India had lost her soul. The leaders of Indian renaissance harked back to the rich ancient heritage of their culture. They drew their inspiration from the Vedānta. An old tradition was reborn, a new vigour imparted to the almost forgotten spiritual forces that had shaped India's destiny through the ages.

The aim of Vedānta is to reveal the underlying harmony of all religions and philosophies, all arts and sciences, as different approaches to the same Reality. Its message is impersonal, scientific, and non-sectrarian. It proclaims that man, divine in his essential nature, is the master of himself and his destiny. This emphasis on the basic harmony of Indian culture and the underlying unity of the apparently diverse currents and forms of Indian social life spring from the fundamental teachings of Vedānta.

This humanistic tradition of Indian culture was once again emphasized by Vivekananda. To him there was no Hindu or Muslim, Brāhmaṇa or untouchable, rich or poor. In every human being he saw the divine and the service of God was identical in his eyes with service of man.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND MAHATMA GANDHI

Vivekananda is, perhaps, the most powerful single influence which prepared the ground for the movement led by Mahatma Gandhi for the liberation of India. There are many parallels between the teachings of Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi, and some of them are almost identical even in their form of expression. The oneness of all religions leading to God, the supreme value of service to humanity rendered without selfish interest or hope of reward but only as service to God, fearless opposition to all forms of slavery and human bondage, love for everyone including one's own enemy, are only a few of the basic beliefs held in common by both the Swami and the Mahatma. Vivekananda's call for fearless and unselfish service consummated as it were in Mahatmaji's practice of Satyāgraha. Both were worshippers of the *Daridra-Nārāyaṇa*; they believed in serving God through serving their fellowmen; both fought religious bigotry and superstition, and both were intensely interested in awakening their countrymen to a sense of self-respect and a faith in their purposeful destiny.

I may, perhaps, mention in this connection that an American author, Vincent Shean, in his recent biography of Mahatma Gandhi entitled *Lead, Kindly Light,* has dealt with this subject in a convincing manner. Now I do not want you to run away with the idea that Vivekananda's was the only influence which moulded Mahatmaji's spiritual and social ideas, much less his technique of political action, for Vivekananda did never directly participate in politics, but there is no doubt that the social content of Gandhiji's political ideas owed much, directly or indirectly, to the teachings and practical example of Swamiji. Under Mahatmaji's leadership, the field of action became infinitely wider and absorbed numerous other forces aspiring after national liberation, but Gandhiji never failed to stress the importance of purity and love, in much the same way as Vivekananda did, amongst his disciples who were dedicated to the redemption of their fellow creatures, not merely in the narrow political field, but in all other spheres of life, material as well as spiritual.

VIVEKAÑANDA—THE INTERNATIONALIST

Vivekananda had a modern mind. Early enough in his life, he realized that the national decadence of India was primarily due to her cultural isolation from the rest of the progressive world. He exhorted the youth of India to go out into the wide world and see for themselves how other peoples lived and take lessons from this experience for the regeneration of their motherland. He deprecated the Indian habit of his days of running down Western materialism and, at the same time, condemned all superstitions and social tyranny perpetrated in the name of religion. Some of his famous utterances come to mind:

'First bread, then religion.'

'No man, no nation, can hate others and live.'

'We talk foolishly against material civilization. The grapes are sour. I do not believe in a God who cannot give me bread here, giving me eternal bliss in heaven.'

'We cannot do without the world outside India; it was our foolishness that we thought we could; we have paid the penalty; let us do it no more.'

It was with this idea of breaking India's crippling isolation that Swamiji undertook his journey to the United States in 1893 and delivered his famous speech at the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in that year. Even in those days, when America seemed to be so far off from India and certainly not in the vortex of world affairs as she is today, Swamiji realized the spiritual kinship that existed between these two countries and that evoked such extraordinary response among the people here to his interpretation of Vedānta and India's true mission in the world. He had a vision of India's national destiny. The following words of Swami Vivekananda sound prophetic today: 'The country has fallen, no doubt, but will as surely rise again, and that upheaval will astound the world.'

THE SPIRITUAL EMPIRE OF RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE MODERN WORLD

Although a visionary and an idealist, Swami Vivekananda was intensely practical. He recognized the value of organization. That is why he established a monastic order, with the twin ideals of renunciation and service, known as Ramakrishna Mission, after the name of his *guru*. Swamiji died early, at the age of 39, and he could barely get together a few earnest colleagues and disciples to form this Mission before he died. And yet, the Mission has grown from strength to strength during the last fifty years. Not only has the Mission established numerous branches all over India, but its activities have extended to a number of foreign countries in Asia, Europe, North and South America.

Now, why has this organization endured, and why have its activities expanded? Surely, there must have been some universal appeal in Vivekananda's ideals and visions which inspired its establishment. He realized that science and technology, as developed in the West, would make it possible to give practical shape, through various social service activities, to such spiritual ideals as those of love of men and the divinity of the soul—ideas that lie at the very heart of Indian mysticism. Without the help of science, such ideals, in modern times, might very well remain mere abstractions. Therefore, he saw the imperative necessity of importing into India from the West the techniques of science for the improvement of the material conditions of the Indian masses. He, also, realized that science and technology, unless based upon and inspired by spiritual idealism, beget lust for power and glory and become an engine of destruction. Thus he felt the supreme necessity of exporting from India to the West its ancient spiritual wisdom. Science and religion are two ways of realizing the same Truth, and they always act as correctives of each other's limitations and prejudices. The Ramakrishna Mission has been constantly working for achieving the unity of religion and science and has thus been fulfilling Vivekananda's ardent vision of the future world order. Today, when the world is standing at the cross-roads of doubt and despair, the teachings of Swami Vivekananda take on fresh significance, and the work of the Ramakrishna Mission and the Vedānta centres assumes an ever-increasing importance. The world would do well to ponder and heed the guiding principles which were formulated by this prophet of new India and of a new world.

On the twenty-ninth of January 1895, I went with my sister to 54 West 33rd Street, New York, and heard the Swami Vivekananda in his sitting room, where were assembled fifteen or twenty ladies and two or three gentlemen. The room was crowded. All the arm chairs were taken; so I sat on the floor in the front row. Swami stood in the corner. He said something, the particular words of which I do not remember, but instantly to me that was truth, and the second sentence he spoke was truth, and the third sentence was truth. And I listened to him for seven years and whatever he uttered was to me truth. From that moment life had a different import. It was as if he made you realize that you were in eternity. It never altered. It never grew. It was like the sun that you will never forget once you have seen. . . .

His power lay, perhaps, in the courage he gave others. He did not ever seem to be conscious of himself at all. It was the other man who interested him. 'When the book of life begins to open, then the fun begins', he would say. He used to make us realize there was nothing secular in life; it was all holy. 'Always remember, you are incidentally an American, and a woman, but always a child of God. Tell yourself day and night who you are. Never forget it.' That is what he used to tell us. His presence, you see, was dynamic. . . .

The thing that held me in Swamiji was his *unlimitedness*. I never could touch the bottom or top or sides. The amazing size of him! . . . It's the reaction on oneself that matters, really, isn't it? What one gets out of it. . . . It is the Truth I saw in Swamiji that has set me free. One's faults seem so insignificant, why remember them when one has the ocean of Truth to be our playground? . . .

I feel that Swamiji is a Rock for us to stand *upon*. That was his function in my life, not worship, nor glory, but a steadiness under one's feet for experiments.

JOSEPHINE MACLEOD

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: HIS UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION

By Dr. R. C. Majumdar

[Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D., formerly Vice-Chancellor of the Dacca University, is a noted historian. In this article, reproduced from an earlier issue of *Prabuddha Bharata*, he says that the speciality of Swami Vivekananda lies in the fact that he brought his spiritual ideas 'to bear upon the common problems of life, and viewed them as parts of a great whole'.]

Men have a natural tendency to fix a label on all great men. Almost by instinct, we come to regard them as a spiritual leader, patriot, hero, poet, scientist, artist, etc. But one feels some difficulty in putting such a label against the name of Swami Vivekananda. A great spiritual leader and religious teacher he undoubtedly was, but somehow one feels that that does not seem to describe him correctly or fittingly. Most of us had not the privilege or good fortune to come into personal contact with him, and form our ideas about him only from his writings. As we go through his speeches, letters, and books, they conjure up before our vision different figures at different times. Sometimes we find before us a great religious teacher imbued with the highest spiritual force; sometimes, a great Indian patriot or social reformer, burning with a fervent desire to free the country from political bondage and shackles of superstition which are sapping the strength and the vitality of the nation; and sometimes he towers high as a superman above the narrow limitations of countries and peoples, a prophet of the brotherhood of man and international love and goodwill, the lack of which is, for the present, the greatest blight upon human civilization. Each of these visions, to which others may be added, is equally deep and impressive, and gains hold of us and crowds out others according to our own mood and the need of the moment and the particular message of the Swami which, for the time being, engages our attention.

India has produced numerous saints and religious teachers, but it would be difficult to detect in their messages an appreciation of the present-day problems of life and a heart bleeding for the suffering millions of India such as we find throughout the writings and speeches of the Swami. Sometimes, he even goes to the length of subordinating religion to other interests of life. Take for example the following: 'At the present time there are men who give up the world to help their own salvation. Throw away everything, even your own salvation, and go and help others. . . . Give up this little life of yours. What matters if you die of starvation, you and I and thousands like us, so long as this nation lives? The nation is sinking, the curse of unnumbered millions is on our heads . . . here is the greatest of all works, here are the sinking millions . . . first bread and then religion. We stuff them too much with religion, when the poor fellows have been starving.'

Like the most advanced political thinkers, he had no illusion of the past, but dreamt of a glorious future for his motherland.

'You, the upper classes of India . . . you are but mummies ten thousand years old . . . you merge yourselves in the void and disappear and let New India arise in your place. Let her arise—out of the peasant's cottage, out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler, and the sweeper.'

Such passages, reflecting what we may call the most advanced views on the secular problems of life, may be quoted in any number.

This diversity in the personality of the Swami, at first, appears to be somewhat puzzling. But with the advance of years and a closer study of his teachings, one slowly realizes that this apparent plurality is the real key to the proper understanding of his personality. It becomes increasingly clear that the great lesson which the Swami's teaching holds out before us is the indivisibility of a human being, in spite of the multiple manifestations of his emotion and intellect, and the consequent unity of the problem which faces society; for society is, after all, a mere aggregate of individuals and, therefore, partakes of their essential character. Let us examine this a little more closely.

Ordinarily, we are apt to look upon a human being as composed of so many watertight compartments, each unregulated by and independent of the other. Thus we conceive of him as religious, educated, wealthy, social, artistic, and so on; and we talk and behave as if these different aspects of men are not interdependent, but separate entities. Similarly, we look upon a society or community from different angles and consider separately its political, social, economic, or religious condition. The practical consequence of this process of thought is that our attempts at improvement or reform proceed upon compartmental basis and only one or another aspect, either of individual or of society, receives our attention at one and the same time. The same process of thought leads us to devote our attention exclusively to one section of humanity—mostly to the community or society to which we ourselves belong—and the rest does not appear to be of primary concern to us.

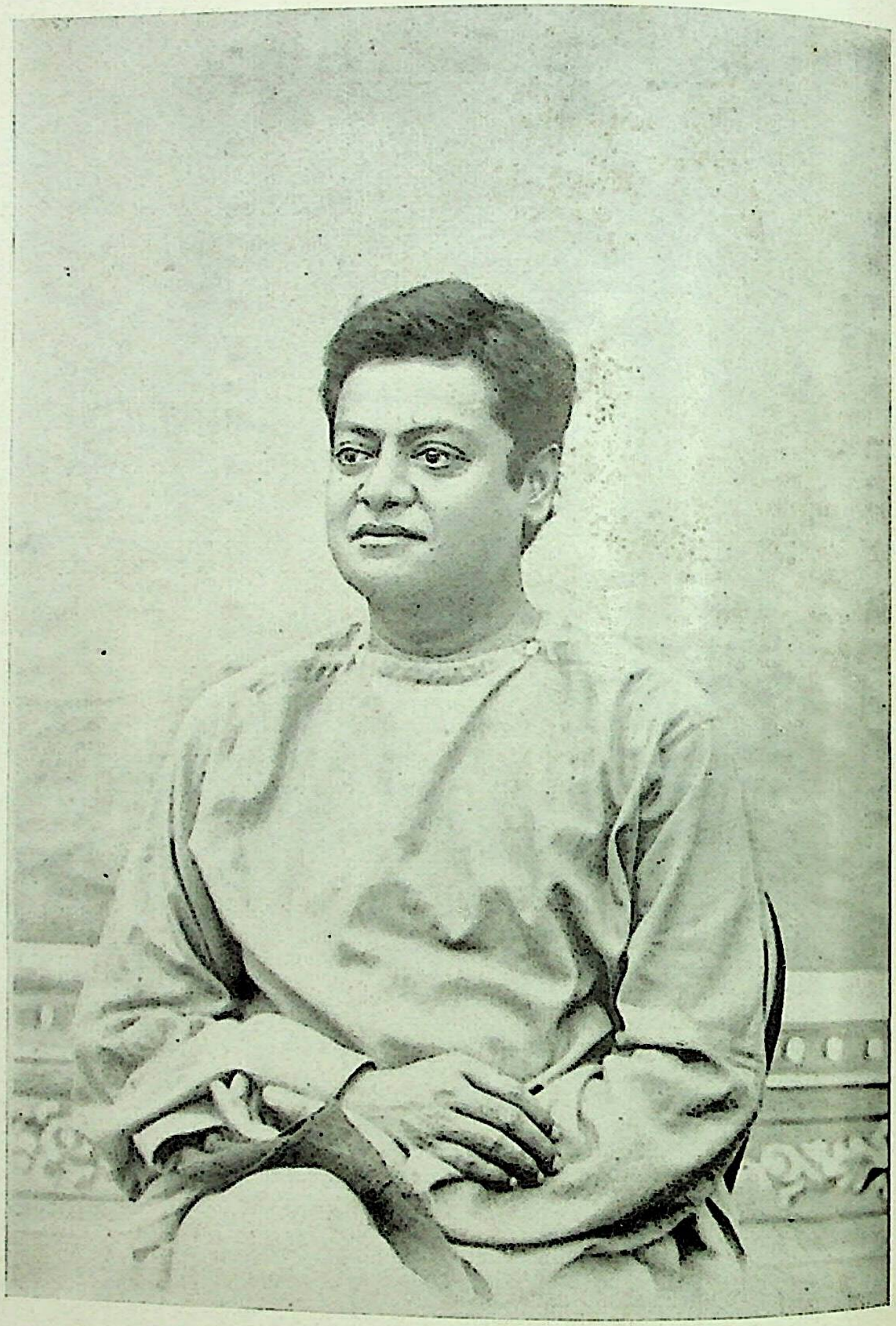
The whole life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda seem to be a crusade against this narrow conception of man and society. To him each individual human being is not a mere bundle of different intellectual and emotional attributes, but an organic entity whose diverse component elements are bound up together by one indivisible force. This constitutes the main spring which guides his life and actions, and so long as this is not brought under control, all attempts at reform are bound to prove futile. Religion, education, wealth, or social influence would not vitally change his outlook or character so long as this unifying vital force in him is not properly regulated. 'I do not believe in reform,' said he, 'I believe in growth.' That one sentence contains the gist of the teachings of the Swami. Individual as well as society must grow on proper lines. A plant will grow on a healthy soil, and spread its foliage and blossom into flowers under natural laws of growth; but you cannot add branches and flowers to the dead or diseased trunk of a tree.

The force that would renovate individual and society and make them grow must come from within. As Swami Vivekananda pointed out again and again, the root cause of all our evils and failure is the lack of faith and physical strength. 'Our young men must be strong first of all. Religion will come afterwards', said he. Again: 'You will understand the *Gītā* better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger.' With strength must grow faith—faith in our purity and ability to do great things and become great. This faith and strength must come from the Upaniṣads or Vedānta, the rich heritage of our ancient philosophy, which formed the basis of all religions that flourished in India. It is derived from the idea of the Ātman or the soul whom the sword cannot cut and the fire cannot burn. Each of us must believe that 'I am the soul' and that would give him strength and faith. The Swami brought this noble teaching of the Vedānta to bear upon everyday life. The Upaniṣadic teachings are not merely for a *sannyāsin*, but for every occupation of life.

'These conceptions of the Vedānta must come, must remain not only in the forest, they must not only go into the cave, but they must come to work out in the bar and the bench, in the pulpit, the cottage of the poor man, with the fishermen that are catching fish and students that are studying.'

(Chicago, September 1893)

'Truth is my God, the universe my country.
I have a truth to teach, I, the Child of God.'



(Calcutta, 1897)

'I am Mother's child. She works, She plays. Why should I plan ? What should I plan ? Things came and went just as She planned. We are Her automata. She is the wirepuller.'

NARENDRA ACCEPTS THE MOTHER

By Mr. Christopher Isherwood

[Mr. Christopher Isherwood is one of the first rank writers of America today and has a large number of well-known books to his credit. The following is the part of a chapter of the book on the life of Sri Ramakrishna, which Mr. Isherwood is, at present, engaged in writing. We are indebted to the editors of *Vedanta and the West,* the bimonthly organ of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, for their permission to reprint the following passage. It will be of interest to the readers to know that the book is appearing serially in the above journal.]

Early in 1884, Naren's (Vivekananda's) father Vishwanath died of a heart attack; he had been ailing for some time. When Vishwanath died, Naren was away from home at the house of some friends, and one of them had to break the news to him. Naren returned home at once and performed the customary rites. When the time came to look into Vishwanath's financial affairs, it was found that he had been spending more than he earned and had left nothing but debts. Some relatives even tried to get a share in the family home by means of a lawsuit. They lost the suit, but Naren was still faced by his duty, as the oldest male member of the family, to support his mother and brothers. He had never known poverty or adversity of any kind before.

'Even before the prescribed period of mourning was over,' he used to relate, 'I was running hither and thither in search of a job. Dizzy from lack of food, I had to go from office to office barefoot in the blazing sun, carrying my application papers. Everywhere I met with a refusal. From that first experience, I learned that unselfish sympathy is very rare in this world; there is no place here for the poor and the weak. Even those who, only a few weeks previously, would have regarded it as a piece of luck if they could do me a favour, now made wry reluctant faces, though they could easily have helped me if they had wished. One day, during that time, when I was walking around in the sun, the soles of my feet became blistered. I was completely exhausted and had to sit down in the shade of the Ochterloney Monument on the Maidan. A friend who happened to be with me wanted to console me; so he sang:

Here blows the wind, the breath of Brahman—
It is his grace we feel—

But when I heard that song, I felt as if he was beating me violently on the head. Thinking of the helplessness of my mother and my brothers, I was filled with resentment and despair. "Be quiet!" I told him. "That fanciful nonsense is all right for people living in the lap of luxury—people who have no idea what hunger is—people whose nearest and dearest aren't going in rags and starving. No doubt, it sounds true and beautiful to them—as it did to me, in the old days. But now I've seen what life is really like. That song is just a pack of lies."

'I dare say my friend was terribly hurt by my words. How could he understand the grinding poverty which had made me utter them? Some mornings, when I got up, I would find that there wasn't enough food for all of us, so I'd tell Mother, "a friend has invited me to lunch". On such days, I had nothing to eat, for I had no money in my pocket. I was too proud to say anything about this to anyone outside our family. Sometimes, rich men would invite me into their houses to sing and play at their parties, and I went, just as I had always done. Most of them never concerned themselves about how I was getting along. A very few used to ask, "why do you look so pale and sad today?" But only one of them ever found out—and that wasn't through me—how things really were. He used to send money to my mother from time to time, anonymously. I am under an eternal debt to him.'

Despite what he had said to his friend on the Maidan, Naren still kept trying to reassure himself that God is good. He used to repeat the Lord's name as he got out of bed in the morning. One day his mother overheard him and said bitterly: 'What's the use of that? You've been repeating the name of the Lord since childhood, and what has He done for you?' Naren had always known his mother as the most pious of devotees. That despair could move her to speak like this shocked him deeply; and now he began seriously to doubt. How could God exist, he asked himself, if the most piteous prayers remained unanswered? How could He be benign, when His creation was so full of evil?

'It was against my nature', Naren's narrative continues, 'to do anything and conceal it from others. Even as a child, I had never been able to conceal my least thought or action, either from fear or any other motive. So it wasn't surprising that I now began to tell people aggressively that God did not exist; and that, even if He did exist, it was no use calling on Him, because it produced no results. Of course, the rumour soon spread around that I had become an atheist, and furthermore, that I was mixing with people of bad character and visiting houses of ill repute. Those lies only made me all the more aggressive. I now began telling everyone, even those who didn't ask my opinion, that I had no objection to anybody's drinking wine or going to a brothel if only this would help him to forget his hard lot in this world of pain. And I added that I would do these things myself, without the least regard for public opinion, if I could ever be convinced that they would make me happy, even for a single moment.'

(Naren was being unfair to himself in saying this. As a matter of fact, his determination to preserve his sexual purity never wavered, even in the most trying days of his poverty and religious doubts. At this time, there were at least two women who offered him money to become their lover. He refused them with contempt.)

'Such news travels fast. It didn't take long for these words of mine, in a completely distorted version, to reach the ears of the Master, not to mention those of his devotees in Calcutta. Some of them came to visit me, to find out the truth, and they made it obvious that they believed at least part of what they had heard, if not all. I was bitterly wounded to realize that they could think so little of me. I told them that it was cowardice to believe in God merely from fear of hell. Quoting Hume, Mill, Bain, Comte, and other Western philosophers, I argued fiercely that there is no evidence of the existence of God. And so they went away, more than ever convinced, as I afterwards learned, of my downfall. In my defiant mood, this actually made me happy. Then the thought came to me that perhaps the Master now believed the same thing. As soon as I thought that, I felt terrible pain. But then I said to myself: "Let him believe it, then. If he does, I can't help it. People's good or bad opinions are worth nothing, anyhow." Later, I discovered that the Master *had* heard all of these lies about me. At first, he had made no comment. Then, when Bhavanath wept and said, "Sir, we never dreamed Naren would sink so low!" he had cried out excitedly: "Silence, you scoundrels! Mother has told me that he could never do such things. If you talk about this any more, I won't have you in the room!"

'But what was this atheism of mine? Nothing but egotism and pride. The experiences I had had from childhood and, most of all, since meeting the Master, rose vividly into my mind in the brightest colours and I said to myself: "God certainly does exist—otherwise, what is life for, what is it worth?

The path to God has to be found, no matter how great the struggle."

'Summer had passed and the rainy season had begun. I went on looking for work, as before. One night, when I was drenched with rain and hadn't eaten all day, I was returning home with tired legs and a mind even more tired than my body. At length I was so exhausted that I couldn't go one single step further. I lay down like a log on the open veranda of a neighbouring house. Perhaps my external consciousness left me for a while. All kinds of thoughts and pictures went through my mind and I had no power to ignore any of them or concentrate upon certain ones. Then, suddenly, I felt as if screen after screen had been raised in my mind by the power of Providence, and now all the problems which had been tormenting me—where is the harmony between God's justice and his mercy, why does evil exist within a benign creation—all were solved. I was beside myself with joy. Afterwards, when I continued my walk home, I found that there wasn't one iota of fatigue in my body and that my mind was filled with infinite peace and strength. The day was just breaking.

'I now became absolutely indifferent to the praise or blame of the world. I was firmly convinced that I wasn't born to earn money, support a family, or seek worldly enjoyments. Secretly, I was preparing to renounce the world, as my grandfather had done. The day arrived on which I had decided to start life as a wandering monk—and then I heard that, on that very day, the Master was coming to the house of a devotee in Calcutta. I thought this was very fortunate: I should see my Guru before I left home forever. But, as soon as I met the Master, he told me imperiously: "You must come with me to Dakshineswar today." I offered various excuses, but he wouldn't take No for an answer. I had to drive back with him. In the carriage, we didn't speak much. When we got to Dakshineswar, I sat in his room for some time. Others were present. Then the Master went into a state of ecstasy. He came over to me suddenly, took my hand in his, and sang, with tears pouring down his face:

> I am afraid to speak,
> I am afraid not to speak,
> For the fear rises in my mind
> That I shall lose you—

All this time, I had fought back the strong emotion I was feeling; now I couldn't do so any longer, and my tears poured down like his. I felt sure that the Master knew all about my plans. The others were astonished to see us behave in this way. After the Master had returned to normal consciousness, one of them asked him what was the matter. He smiled and answered: "It's just something between the two of us." That night he sent the others away and called me to him and said: "I know you have come to the world to do Mother's work; you can never lead a worldly life. But, for my sake, stay with your family as long as I'm alive."'

So Naren promised to do this. And now he set himself to find employment with renewed energy. He got a post in an attorney's office. He translated some books. But these were temporary jobs; they brought no real security to his mother and brothers. So now Naren decided to ask Ramakrishna to pray on his behalf that the family's money-troubles might be overcome. Ramakrishna answered that it was for Naren himself to pray. He must forget his earlier scruples, accept the existence of the Divine Mother, and pray to her for help. 'Today is Tuesday,' Ramakrishna added, 'a day specially sacred to Mother. Go to the temple tonight and pray. Mother will grant you whatever you ask for. I promise you that.'

Naren was now almost free of the prejudices he had acquired from the Brahmo Samaj. Experience had taught him to have faith in Ramakrishna's words, and he was eager to do as he had been told. He waited impatiently for the night. At nine o'clock, Ramakrishna sent him to the temple. As

Naren was on his way there, a kind of drunkenness possessed him; he was reeling. And when he entered the temple, he saw at once that the Divine Mother was actually alive. Naren was overwhelmed and prostrated himself again and again before her shrine, exclaiming, 'Mother—grant me discrimination, grant me detachment, grant me divine knowledge and devotion, grant me that I may see you without obstruction, always!' His heart was filled with peace. The universe completely disappeared from his consciousness and Mother alone remained.

When Naren came back from the temple, Ramakrishna asked him if he had prayed for the relief of his family's wants. Naren was taken aback; he had forgotten to do so. Ramakrishna told him to return quickly and make the prayer. Naren obeyed, but again he became drunk with bliss, forgot his intention, and prayed only for detachment, devotion, and knowledge as before. 'Silly boy!' said Ramakrishna, when he returned and confessed this, 'couldn't you control yourself a little, and remember that prayer? Go back again and tell Mother what you want—be quick!' This time, Naren's experience was different. He did not forget the prayer. But when he came for the third time before the shrine, he felt a sense of deep shame; what he had been about to ask seemed miserably trivial and unworthy. 'It was', he said later, 'like being graciously received by a king and then asking him for gourds and pumpkins.' So, once more, he asked only for detachment, devotion, and knowledge. However, as he came out of the temple, he felt suddenly convinced that all this was a trick Ramakrishna had played on him. 'It was certainly you', he told Ramakrishna, 'who made me intoxicated. Now you must at least say a prayer for me that my mother and brothers will never lack food and clothing.' 'My child', Ramakrishna told him affectionately, 'you know I could never offer a prayer like that for anyone; the words wouldn't come out of my mouth. I told you that you'd get whatever you asked Mother for; but you couldn't ask that, either. It is not in you to ask for worldly benefits. What am I to do about it?' But Naren answered firmly: 'You must say the prayer, for my sake. I'm certain they'll be freed from want if only you'll say they will.' At length, Ramakrishna yielded to Naren's urging and said: 'All right—they will never lack plain food and clothing.' And this statement was proved true.

This acceptance by Naren of the worship of God with form was, of course, a most important event in his life. During his later years, he was accustomed to say: 'Ramakrishna was a *jñānin* (a man of intellectual discrimination) within and a *bhakta* (a man of devotion) without; but I am a *bhakta* within and a *jñānin* without.' In general, Naren's teaching as Vivekananda laid emphasis on discrimination rather than on devotion. He once wrote to an American lady, in that serio-comic style which was so characteristic of his mature personality, 'Kālī worship is my especial *fad*'. But he was experienced enough to know that the concept of Mother Kālī is one which the majority of potential devotees in the West will always find hard to accept; and he seldom mentioned her in his American and British lectures.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S MAGNA CARTA OF PEACE TO HUMANITY

BY SWAMI TEJASANANDA

[Swami Tejasananda, a former Editor of *Prabuddha Bharata*, is now the Principal of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, Belur Math. In this thought-provoking article, he shows how, in the message of Swami Vivekananda, lie the ingredients for ushering in a new era of lasting peace and goodwill in this war-torn world of ours.]

I. RELIGION—THE BACKBONE OF THE INDIAN RACE

Today, in the midst of the full blaze of our political independence, we recall with pride and reverence the hallowed memory of Swami Vivekananda who occupies a unique place in the great hierarchy of the illustrious patriots of modern India. At the clarion call of this heroic monk, the soul of India was stirred to its inmost depth, and the thought forces of the race compressed themselves, as it were, into the single organic life of that noble personality who set himself to the Herculean task of re-building the nation on the basis of a synthetic ideal, bearing in it the living strands of the cultural forces of the East and the West.

The importance of the manifold contributions of this patriot-saint of modern India can hardly be overestimated. India, after centuries of political servitude and economic exploitation at the hands of the alien powers, has once again leaped up into full flame of life and wrested from the hands of destiny her long lost freedom, thereby testifying to the fact that a nation can never die and its culture can never be annihilated, if it be loyal to its spiritual traditions. 'Everywhere, in the East and the West,' said Swami Vivekananda, 'I find among nations one great ideal, which forms the backbone, so to speak, of that race. With some, it is politics, with the other, it is social culture, others again may have intellectual culture, and so on, for their national background. But this, our mother-land, has religion and religion alone for its basis, for its backbone, for the bed-rock upon which the whole building of its life has been based. ... This is the line of life, this is the line of growth, and this is the line of well-being in India—to follow the track of religion.' That this nation lives—the *raison de'tre* is because it still holds on to the Supersensuous. Romain Rolland, the illustrious litterateur of the West, strikes the very same note in the celebrated work entitled *The Life of Sri Ramakrishna* when he says: 'The age-long history of the spirit of India is the history of a countless throng marching ever to the conquest of supreme Reality. All the great people of the world, willingly or unwillingly, have the same fundamental aim; they belong to the conquerors who, age by age, go up to assault the Reality of which they form a part, and which lures them on to strive and climb. But each one does not see the same face of Reality. It is like a great fortified city, beleaguered on different sides by different armies, who are not in alliance. Each army has its tactics and weapons to solve its own problem of attack and assault. Our Western races storm the bastions, the outer works. They desire to overcome the physical forces of nature, to make her laws own, so that they may construct weapons therefrom for gaining the inner citadel, and forcing the whole citadel to capitulate. India proceeds along different lines. She goes straight to the centre, to the Commander-in-chief of the unseen General Headquarters; for the Reality she seeks is transcendental.' In fact, this has been the immortal theme of Indian life—the message of her culture, and this has enabled India to stick to her ideal of peace and goodwill and to triumph over the brutal onslaughts of the forces of materialism on the citadel of her life from age to age.

Swami Vivekananda was fully conscious that no lasting peace could ever be established on earth through the mere fanfaronade of politico-economic principles of a few politically obsessed people of the world, who, immured in the prison house of their own passions and prejudices, could hardly get above their personal predilections and sordid self-interests, political or other, and dictate real peace to humanity. It is only God-men who have felt peace, lived in peace, and diffused peace all around, that can transcend all limitations, geographical or other, and claim that sacred privilege of being the real peace-makers in the world. Swami Vivekananda belongs to the category of those dynamic spiritual personalities whose lives and contributions are for all time the inestimable possessions not only of India, but also of the entire mankind. It is worthwhile to know how this cyclonic monk of modern India put himself into the treadmill of austere discipline to acquire that priceless wealth of peace and wisdom within himself and how he gave it out in full to the world for the benefit of humanity. He himself unfolds the secrets of his life 'To a Friend' in the following words:

> Friendless, clad in rags, with no possession,
> Feeding from door to door on what chance would bring,
> The frame broken under *tapasyā's* weight;
> What riches, ask thou, have I earned in life?
>
> Listen, friend, I will speak my heart to Thee
> I have found in my life this Truth Supreme—
> Buffeted by waves, in this whirl of life,
> There's one ferry that takes across the sea—
>
> Formulas of worship, control of breath,
> Science, philosophy, systems varied,
> Relinquishment, possession, and the life,
> All these are but delusions of the mind—
> Love, love—that's the one thing, the sole treasure.
>
> From the highest Brahman to the yonder worm,
> And the very minutest atom,
> Everywhere is the same God, the All-love,
> Friend, offer mind, soul, body, at their feet.

Thus equipped, the great Swami 'wandered free from plan, caste, home, constantly alone with God'. 'And there was no single hour of his life when he was not brought into contact with the sorrows, the desire, the abuses, misery, the feverishness of living men, rich and poor, in town and field; he became one with their lives.' 'The Great Book of Life', says Romain Rolland, 'revealed to him what all the books in the libraries could not have done . . . the tragic face of the present day, the cry of the people of India and of the world for help, and the heroic duty of the new Oedipus, whose task it was to deliver Thebes from the talons of the Sphinx or to perish with Thebes.' The Swami, with the boldness of a seer, threw the gauntlet of challenge to the warring humanity and said: 'The question has to be decided whether peace will survive or war; whether goodwill will survive or wickedness; whether muscle will survive or brain; whether worldliness will survive or spirituality. We have solved our problem ages ago and held on to it through good or evil fortune, and mean to hold on to it till the end of time. Our solution is unworldliness—renunciation. This is the theme of Indian life-work, the burden of her eternal song, the backbone of her existence—the spiritualization of the human race.'

II. MESSAGE OF PEACE—A UNIVERSAL SPECIFIC

Did not the old *ṛṣis* of India sing to the same tune? Did not the Lord Buddha and Śaṅkara, Nānak and Rāmānuja, Caitanya and Ramakrishna deliver the same message to the world? Did not even Jesus the Christ —the great prophet of Asia—boldly sound the tocsin of alarm in his immortal utterance 'All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword'? It was this great Jesus of

Nazareth who first healed the wound which Peter's sword had inflicted, and then voluntarily delivered his own person up to suffer the last extremes of insult and torment. Indeed, a true prophet of peace would welcome death on the Cross rather than sell the self for pelf or conquer the world with the sword. For, as Professor Toynbee, the author of the *A Study of History*, has rightly observed: 'The truth seems to be that the sword which has once drunk blood cannot be permanently restrained from drinking blood again, any more than a tiger which has once tasted human flesh can be prevented from becoming a man-eater doomed to death. . . . So it is with the society, which has sought salvation through the sword.' The trend of events in the world shows that the modern civilization has brought in its trail death and destruction more than anything else. The inhuman atrocities that are being perpetrated in the sacred name of peace and culture, the violence and oppression that blacken the annals of every great nation of the world from day to day set us seriously athinking as to whether or not mankind is once again running along the downward curve of evolution. As a matter of fact, violence can never be overcome by violence. Materialism and all its miseries can never be conquered by materialism. It aggravates desires, and multiplies wants and miseries, clash and conflict in life and society. Armies, when they attempt to conquer armies, only multiply and make brutes of humanity. More than half a century back Swami Vivekananda, with his forecasting vision of possibilities, pointed out: 'The whole of Western civilization will crumble to pieces in the next fifty years if there is no spiritual foundation. You will find that the very centre from which such ideas as government by force sprang up are the very first centres to degrade, degenerate, and crumble to pieces. And what will save Europe is the religion of the Upaniṣads.' The world is painfully aware how his prophetic words are being fulfilled today before its very eyes. Therefore it is that the great Swami has come forward today, following in the footprints of his spiritual forbears, with his message of peace—a universal specific, without which the wounds and ills of human life can never be cured. It is time for the great leaders of thought to rise equal to the occasion and to do the behest of these great master-minds so as to swing the pendulum of human thought from the noisy violence of war to the silence of the soul.

III. UNITY IN DIVERSITY

It cannot be denied that there is something hidden in the inmost depths of the heart which wants to break through all physical barriers and human limitations to visualize the supreme Source of Peace—the Eternal Reality. The realization of this highest Truth is the true measure of greatness in the life of an individual or of a race. For greatness is not a thing of kilometres or an extent in space. The true wealth of a man or a nation is the spiritual genius that shines and radiates, and unless and until this light of wisdom, the realization of the oneness of all being, is kindled in the human heart and transfigures the entire personality, it would be vain to expect a healthy revolution in the existing relation between man and man, between nation and nation. In fact, the warring instincts of mankind cannot be set at rest without a universal seeping of these spiritual ideas into men's minds and hearts. And this the mankind must learn from the immortal teachings of Vedānta—the treasure-house of the accumulated wisdom and experiences of the ancient seers of India. They have visualized that there is one persistent Reality—and abiding substratum on which the cosmic dance of phenomena has been going on from eternity. They have realized that, from the highest to the lowest, from Brahman down to the minutest particle of dust, there is but one pervasive Reality 'through whose fear all elements function—the fire burns, the sun gives light unto the

Universe, the moon sheds its lustre, the air blows, and the Death does its own duty'. It has also been their experience that this world, bereft of its names and forms, is one with Brahman, and that every individual, organic or inorganic, is in essence the same—the apparent differences being due to human ignorance which brings about a dichotomy in what is otherwise a homogeneous entity. The finding out of such a broad background of unity in the domain of apparently conflicting and heterogeneous thoughts and beliefs of mankind, a basis on which all men and women, irrespective of caste, creed, and colour, can stand in mutual love and admiration, the identity of the individual with the universal—is one of the boldest pronouncements of Vedānta. 'The modern researches of the West', says Swami Vivekananda, 'have demonstrated through physical means the oneness and solidarity of the whole universe: how physically speaking, you and I, the sun, moon, and stars, are but little wavelets in the ocean of matter, the *samaṣṭi* and how, going one step further, it is also shown in the Vedānta that behind that idea of the unity of the whole show, the real soul is one. There is but one soul throughout the universe, all is but one existence.' The humanity is seeking this impulse of thought as the universal spiritual pabulum to satisfy the hunger of its soul. The religion of India is thus a clarion-call to rise to the radiance of the spirit, and her science and economics, arts and literatures have the same upward look. This urge toward the Eternal and the fidelity to her ideal of renunciation and service, universal brotherhood and goodwill, based on the recognition of the fundamental oneness of being, constitute the real Magna Carta of peace which the bewildered humanity needs today. And it is India that should deliver once again this message to the war-weary world. So did the great Swami declare: 'Hence have started the founders of religions from the most ancient times, deluging the earth again and again with the pure and perennial waters of spiritual truth. Hence have proceeded the tidal waves of philosophy that have covered the earth, East or West, North or South, and hence again, must start the wave which is going to spiritualize the material civilization of the world.'

IV. NEED OF SPIRITUAL AMBASSADORS

It is a tragic phenomenon that there is a sinister attempt on the part of some war-mongers to drown the voice of the ṛṣis of India in the clang and clatter of their arms, and fresh fetters are also being forged from day to day to enslave human thought and action in the sacred name of freedom and peace. Rightly did Dr. S. Radhakrishnan remark in a spirit of indignation: 'Integrity is lost and truth-seeking has become the handmaid of State policy. In the belligerent countries of the present day, the intellectuals must think, if they think at all, in one particular way. If they show any independence, they do so at the risk of their lives or their freedom of action. There is no use making any profession of impartiality. We must think to order. ... Before our eyes we see how intellect has become the servant of diplomacy. ... Spiritual powers are being exploited for temporal purposes. Religion is made to turn the mills of State authority.' 'Men are suffering', he further adds, 'from the fever of violent motion and they make philosophy out of it. ... Pure contemplation, aesthetic ecstasy or reflection on the end of life is dismissed as mystic raving or poetic dreaming.' No truer picture of the prostitution of human intellect can be so realistically drawn, as has been done by this great Oriental thinker—now the President of the Republic of India.

No doubt, various 'isms' have, of late sprung into life and have already secured a firm foothold in the citadel of human thought and action in many a country of the world to solve the hydra-headed problems of mankind. But, in the opinion of Swami Vivekananda, the solution does not lie merely in the fantastic formulation of theories, or in the balancing of political powers, or in the evolution of artificial equilibrium of economic forces. The real remedy lies, he emphatically declares, at the hands of those powerful personalities—both men and women, who have gained the vision of spiritual unity and are imbued with the spirit of sacrifice and service, freedom and courage. They must go forth as cultural ambassadors to the farthest corners of the world for the dissemination of the universal and most democratic principles of Vedānta which proclaims the fundamental equality of all on the spiritual plane. Persons whose lives are moulded in the light of such a lofty idealism are the real peace-makers of the world and true lovers of mankind. They entertain the deepest regard for every faith, for every individual, and feel no scruple in going to the mosque of a Mohammedan or the Church of a Christian. They will delight in taking refuge in the Buddha and his Law and sit in meditation with the Hindu in the forest or in the temple. To them, the Bible, the Vedas, the Koran, the Avesta, the Holy Granth and all other sacred books are so many pages of the Book of God, and infinite number of pages yet remain to be unfolded. This catholicity of outlook is what the world needs today, and nothing fulfils so beautifully the manifold requirements of mankind as this universal gospel of Vedānta. It stands as a living faith, embodying the varied aspirations of humanity, and furnishes the much needed forum where all faiths and thoughts of humanity can meet and shake hands with one another in a spirit of love and fellowship. It is, however, a hopeful sign of the times that this great principle has already begun to form the basis of all the latest political and social aspirations that are coming up in the various countries of Europe and America. And time is not far when there will be a happy synthesis of the cultural forces of the East and the West as embodied in the Vedānta of the East and the science of the West to evolve a new civilization in which the various types of cultures will be harmoniously blended, but at the same time, still shall have adequate scope for full play and development. 'Let us hope', said the Swami, 'that the East and the West may make their full contribution to the perfection of humanity, and the last civilization of the world, like her first, may be a civilization, not of struggle and warfare, but of peace and sympathy, charity and harmonious co-operation to a great end.'

V. RESPONSE TO THE CALL

Today, we hear even from the lips of the eminent statesmen of India this very same message of peace which has travelled down the centuries from time immemorial in this home of spirituality. It has come to us today in the shape of the five principles of co-existence—the Panchasila formulated by our beloved leader Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, which is gaining ground from day to day even when there is an ominous threat of destruction of mankind through atomic warfare. The saner section of humanity is listening today with great relief to this immortal voice of India which has an irresistible appeal of its own.

Madeleine R. Harding once rightly said: 'The thinkers of India have a deep-rooted conviction that India is a spiritual storehouse of the world, and it is an oft-repeated saying that India has a message definitely of her own to give to the world. This view is not held by Indians only, but also by Western students who have opened their minds to receive truth wherever found.'

It augurs well that great geniuses, shining on the intellectual horizon of the West have begun to dream nobler dreams of a New Faith that would usher in a period of universal peace in the world. 'Out of the trouble and tragedy of these times and confusion before us,' said the celebrated historian, Mr. H. G. Wells, 'there may emerge a moral and intellectual revival, a religious revival, of a simplicity and scope to draw together men of alien races and new discrete traditions, into one common and sustained way of living for the world's service. The beginning of such things are never conspicuous. Great movements of the racial soul come at first "like a thief in the night", and then suddenly are discovered to be powerful and world-wide. Religious emotion—stripped of corruptions and freed from its last priestly entanglements—may presently blow through life again like a great wind, bursting the doors and flinging open shutters of the individual life and making many things possible and easy that in these days of exhaustion seem almost difficult to desire.' Moreover, he 'finds today spreading over the hillsides upon a windy day in spring, the idea that there is a happiness in self-devotion, greater than any personal gratification or triumph, and a life of mankind, greater and more important than the sum of all the individual lives within it'.

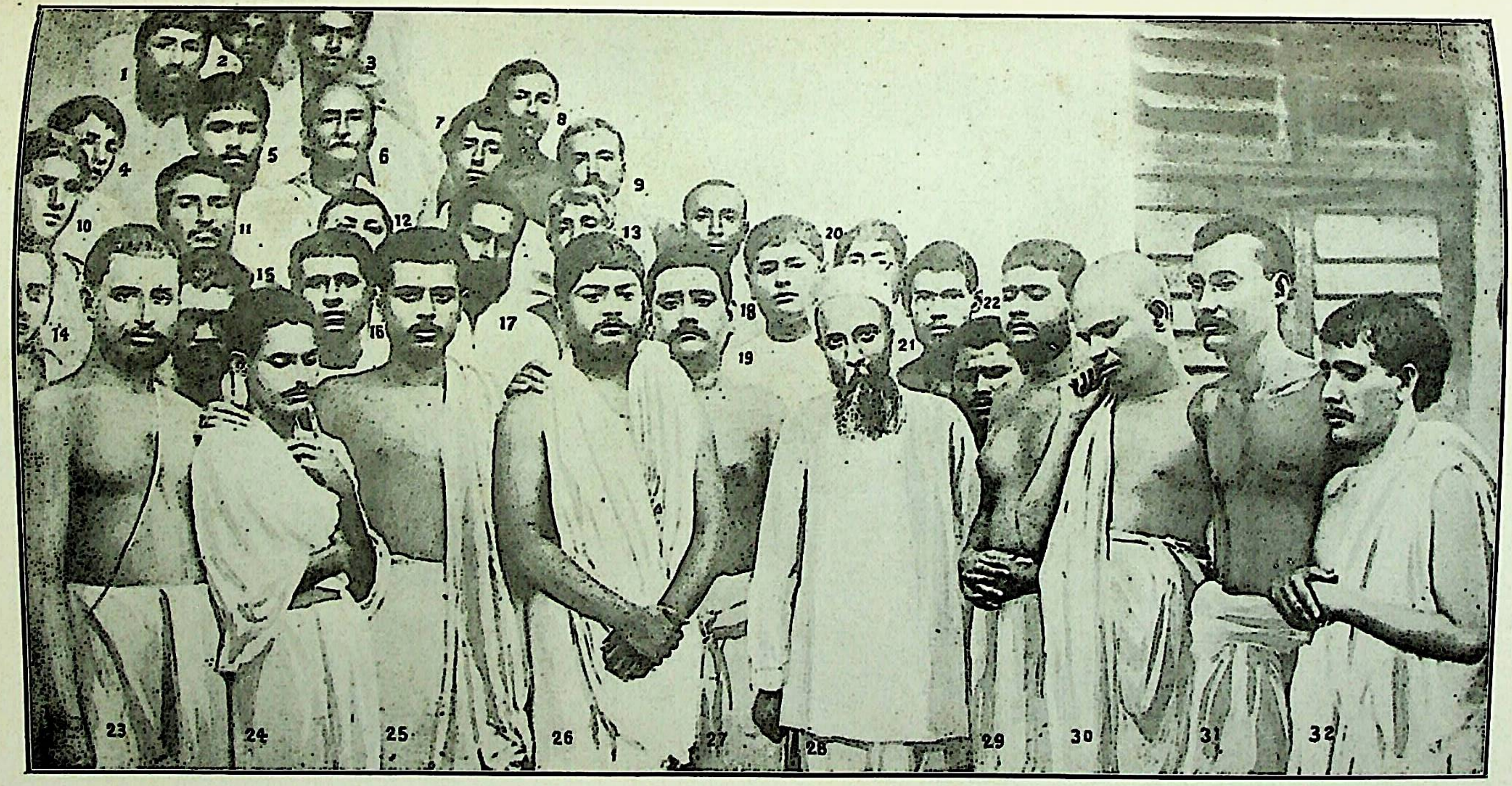
VI. AN ERA OF PEACE IN SIGHT

Swami Vivekananda, with his characteristic insight into the future, proclaimed many years ago that from India such a tidal wave would rise and sweep over the whole world. It would be a spiritual revival, he said, which will have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, which will recognize divinity in every man and woman, and whose scope, whose whole force will be centred in aiding humanity to realize its own true divine nature.

Sometime back, Mr. Floyd H. Ross, Professor of World Religions in the University of South California in U.S.A., wrote in his thoughtful article on 'Vedānta and the West':

'One of the most vital contemporary religious and educational movements in India today is the Ramakrishna Movement. Under the leadership of men trained in the spirit of Vivekananda and Ramakrishna, the Ramakrishna Centres are living examples of how the timeless truths of the past have value when they are continuously relived and reinterpreted in the present.' 'The Ramakrishna Centres in the West', he further said, 'are playing their own part quietly in helping to prepare the way for the united pilgrimage of mankind toward self-understanding and peace.' The learned Professor rightly concludes: 'The oneness of mankind is something which modern man everywhere needs to learn if he is to move creatively into one world where the richness of diversity does not mean an anarchy of foolish competition; but each person needs to find the meaning of that oneness in his own self-hood, before he can go far in helping to build one world.'

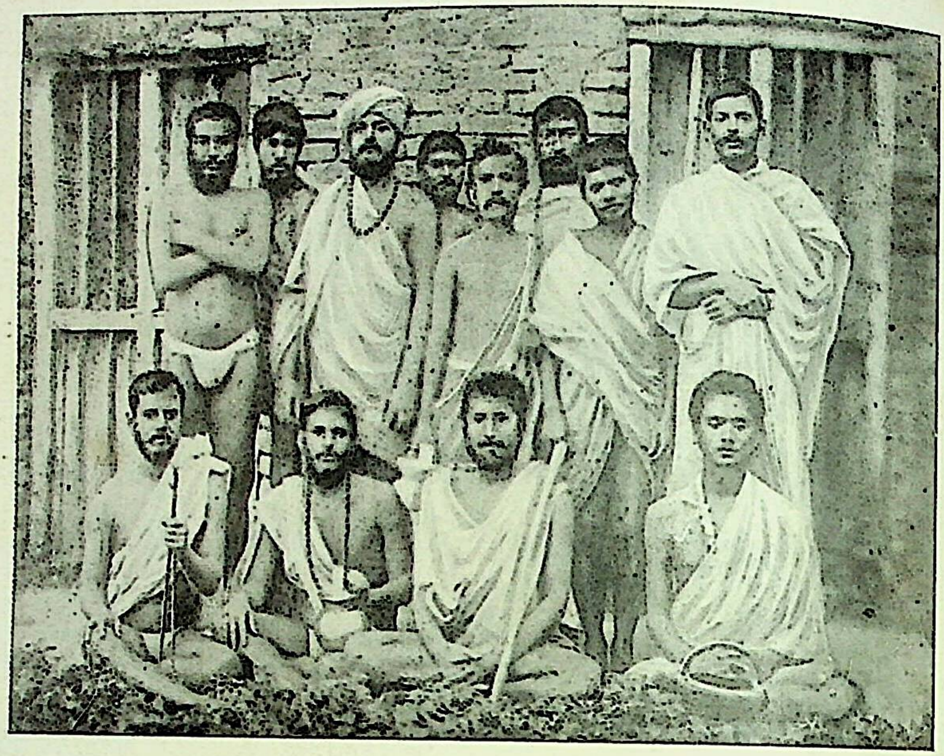
'Up India,' exhorted the great Swami, 'and conquer the world with your spirituality. … The only condition of national life, of awakened and vigorous national life is the conquest of the world by Indian thought.' 'I am waiting for the day when mighty minds will go from India to the ends of the world to teach spirituality and renunciation—those ideas which have come from the forest of India and belong to the Indian soil alone.' Let us shake off the fetters of intellectual or spiritual slavery and respond to the call of the great monk of India and make a vigorous effort to usher in a new era of lasting peace and goodwill in this war-torn world of ours.



AFTER SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S PASSING AWAY

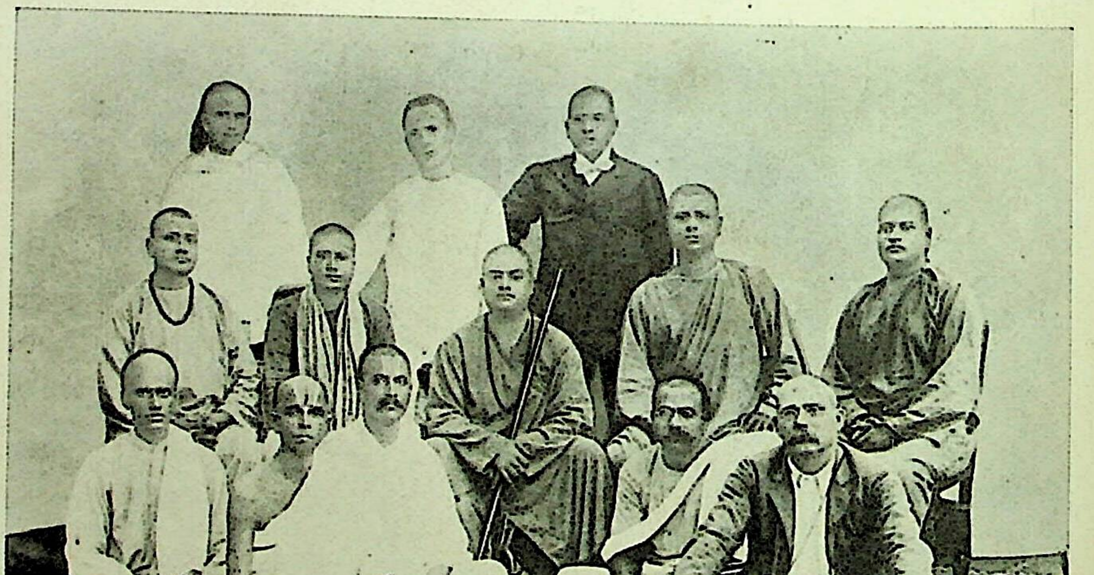
(with a group of devotees at Cossipore Garden House, 16 August 1886)

1. Mahendranath Gupta (M) 3. Kali (Swami Abhedananda) 5. Sharat (Swami Saradananda) 6. Mani Mullick 7. Gangadhar (Swami Akhandananda) 8. Navagopal 9 Surendra 11. Tarak (Swami Shivananda) 13. Senior Gopal (Swami Advaitananda) 15. Vaikuntha 17. Manomohan 18. Harish 19. Narayan 21. Shashi (Swami Ramakrishnananda) 22. Latu (Swami Adbhutananda) 23. Bhavanath 24. Baburam (Swami Premananda) 25. Niranjan (Swami Niranjanananda) 26. Narendra (Swami Vivekananda) 27. Ramachandra Dutta 28. Balaram Bose 29. Rakhal (Swami Brahmananda) 30. Nityagopal 31. Yogindra (Swami Yogananda) 32. Devendra.



WITH THE BROTHER DISCIPLES

(Baranagore Math, 1887)



AFTER THE RETURN FROM THE WEST

(Madras, February 1897)

'A RADIANT GLANCE OF ŚIVA'

By Sri M. P. Pandit

[Sri M. P. Pandit is a deep scholar and is in charge of the publications of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. In this short but beautiful article, he tells about the '*contacts*' that Sri Aurobindo had with Swami Vivekananda, even though the latter had then left his mortal frame.]

Not many are aware of the part played by Śwami Vivekananda in the life and work of Sri Aurobindo. In fact, none at all knew of it till Sri Aurobindo himself revealed this part and its significance in a biographical note written during later years and in his talks with the disciples. Sri Aurobindo, it will be recalled, had no human *guru* as such, though he received important help from different sources on different occasions. And one of these was the unexpected guidance and direction received from Vivekananda under interesting circumstances, long after he left his body in 1902.

When Sri Aurobindo returned to India at the age of 21, after a stay of fourteen years in England, and took to study Indian culture and life, he came—like most educated people of the time—under the influence of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda through their sayings and writings.[1] And though the Advaita Vedānta expounded and popularized by them was not relevant to the turn of Sri Aurobindo's mind, he beheld and recognized the mighty spiritual afflatus embodied in the Master.

'What was Ramakrishna?' he asks, and answers: 'God manifest in a human being.'[2] He was an *avatāra*, 'as much an *avatāra* as Christ or Caitanya'[3] who had a definite purpose to fulfil in the spiritual evolution of humanity, viz. to found and establish the Truth of the unity of all spiritual experience and realization. He was bound by no man-made rules, though he chose to manifest his divinity under human conditions. Says Sri Aurobindo: 'Ramakrishna, having attained by his own internal effort the central illumination, accepted several teachers in the different paths of Yoga, but always showed in the manner and swiftness of his realization that this acceptance was a concession to the general rule by which effective knowledge must be received as by a disciple from a *guru*.'[4]

Giving a considered estimate, Sri Aurobindo observes: 'In the life of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, we see a colossal spiritual capacity first driving straight to the divine realization, taking, as it were, the kingdom of heaven by violence and then seizing upon one yogic method after another and extracting the substance out of it with an incredible rapidity, always to return to the heart of the whole matter, the realization and possession of God by the power of love, by the extension of inborn spirituality into various experience and by the spontaneous play of an intuitive knowledge.'[5]

And, 'What was Vivekananda? A radiant glance from the eye of Śiva.'[6] We do not pause to dwell on the full import of this cryptic statement. It will need an exposition quite beyond the scope of this paper.

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[1] Speaking of their great role in the renaissance of India, he writes: 'It was in religion first that the soul of India awoke and triumphed. There were always indications, always great forerunners, but it was when the flower of the educated youth of Calcutta bowed down at the feet of an illiterate Hindu ascetic, a self-illumined ecstatic and "mystic", without a single trace or touch of the alien thought or education upon him, that the battle was won. The going forth of Vivekananda, marked out by the Master as the heroic soul destined to take the world between his two hands and change it, was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake, not only to survive but to conquer' (*The Ideal of Karmayogin*).

[2] *Thoughts and Aphorisms.*

[3] *On Yoga* (*II*).

[4] *On Yoga* (*I*).

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Thoughts and Aphorisms.*

'Vivekananda was a soul of puissance, if ever there was one, a very lion among men. ... We perceive his influence still working gigantically, we know not well how, we know not well where, in something that is not yet formed, something leonine, grand, intuitive, upheaving that has entered the soul of India, and we say, "Behold, Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his Mother and in the souls of her children".'[7] Sri Aurobindo mentions of his *contact* with Vivekananda on two occasions. Note that there was no meeting between them at all during the life-time of Vivekananda. The first occasion was when Sri Aurobindo was practising *prāṇāyāma,* which started in 1904 and continued for some time. He says: 'I had ... direct experience of Vivekananda's presence when I was practising *haṭha-yoga.* I felt his presence standing behind and watching over me. That exerted a great influence afterwards in my life.'[8]

The second was when Sri Aurobindo had been detained in the Alipore Jail (1908-1909). By that time, Sri Aurobindo had already attained the realization of the Silent, Spaceless, and Timeless Brahman—the state of *nirvāṇa.* Now, let him speak: 'From the beginning, I didn't feel *nirvāṇa* to be the highest spiritual achievement. Something in me always wanted to go on farther. But, even then, I didn't ask for this new experience. In fact, in *nirvāṇa,* with that peace, one does not ask for anything. But the truth of the Supermind[9] was put into me. I had no idea of the Supermind when I started, and for long it was was not clear to me.

'It was the spirit of Vivekananda who first gave me a clue in the direction of the Supermind. This clue led me to see how the Truth-consciousness works in everything. ... He didn't say "Supermind". "Supermind" is my own word. He just said to me, "This is this, this is that" and so on. That was how he proceeded—by pointing and indicating. He visited me for fifteen days in Alipore jail and, until I could grasp the whole thing, he went on teaching me and impressed upon my mind the working of the Higher Consciousness—the Truth-Consciousness in general—which leads towards the Supermind. He would not leave me until he had put it al into my head.' 'I never expected him an yet he came to teach me. And he was ver exact and precise even in the minute details.'[10]

A host of questions arise. How is it th Vivekananda never spoke of these ranges Consciousness leading to the Gnosis, duri his life-time? Did he not withdraw int *nirvāṇa* or the one Self, after he 'spat out th body'? Did he, and does he, still contin to be in the earth-atmosphere for the benef of humanity struggling towards Godhead These are all pertinent questions, but th touch upon the occult side of manifestati which would require a separate treatme We can only say there is more in creati than meets the human ken.

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[7] *Bankim-Tilak-Dayananda.*

[8] *Mother India,* June 1962: 'Talks with Sri Aurobindo', by Nirodbaran.

[9] The 'Supermind' is the Principle of Truth-Consciousness in creation—the Ṛta-Cit of the Veda, the Vijñāna of the Upaniṣad, which holds the key for the plenary emergence of the Divine in the manifesta It forms the corner-stone in the arch of Sri Aurobin philosophy of the Life Divine and his means to trans it into action, the 'Integral Yoga'.

[10] *Mother India,* July 1962: 'Talks with Sri Au bindo', by Nirodbaran.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE EMANCIPATION OF RELIGION

BY SWAMI SHRADDHANANDA

[Swami Shraddhananda of The Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco, U.S.A., in this article, says that, though many dark evils have been perpetrated in human society in the name of religion, true religion is really a source of light, strength, hope, and peace to mankind. And it was Swami Vivekananda's genius which presented religion to the modern world as a positive power of goodness and defined it as a liberating force.]

Swami Vivekananda's greatness as a religious preacher consisted as much in freely, but constructively, criticizing religion as in eloquently delineating its merits. He never refused to admit that, through the ages, dark evils have been perpetrated in human society in the name of religion. True, religion has been a source of light, strength, hope, and peace to mankind, but it is also an undeniable fact that, because of religion, millions of men and women have had to pass through unspeakable horrors, humiliation, and sufferings. How the same force can manifest these contradictory elements is, surely, an enigma. But in Swami Vivekananda's exposition of religion, we do find a solution of this riddle.

This great *sannyāsin*, whose dominating interest of life was man, liked to define religion as a liberating force for man in the highest sense of the term. Man, essentially, is a free spirit, and anything obstructing this freedom is sure to be challenged by him. Man's progress in civilization is only the story of his fight against, and victory over, various influences that served to limit his freedom. Science, art, literature, travel, technology, philosophy, and so on, are each a signpost of man's conquest of conditions in which his bodily powers, thoughts, hopes, and emotions worked within pitiably inadequate boundaries. Religion, too, is no exception. Its essential characteristic is an urge for freedom. While this is true also of other human attainments, the liberation sought by religion is more comprehensive than that which can be effected by other endeavours like science, art, and so on, because the impeding force in this case is colossal—*māyā*, *avidyā*, original sin, and so on. The goal of religion is the achievement of complete emancipation for man, the return to that absolute independence of spirit which is man's birthright. Lesser disciplines are satisfied with lesser freedoms. Religion should have no quarrel with these disciplines because, from the point of view of this analysis, they, too, aspire to liberate man from bondage. They, however, stop halfway; religion has to go to the farthest goal.

Yet this great liberating force which is religion, sometimes through the irony of circumstances, becomes an agency of narrowness, hatred, and dissension. Like the sun hidden by clouds, it ceases to shed its light and warmth upon people who need them. Religion no longer possesses, then, the power to bring to its follower that great freedom which is also supreme knowledge and love. Religion, then, becomes itself enfettered by man's foolishness and bigotry. In that state of enchainment, religion, probably, deserves to be castigated by many of the strong words of censure that are hurled against it by impatient pundits from time to time.

The emancipation of religion is, therefore, according to Swami Vivekananda, more important than a blind enthusiasm for religion. The world has rather too much of religion—enfettered religion—heaps of man-made sanctions and prohibitions, dogmas, obsessions, slogans, bigoted assertions. It would have been better for us if some of this stuff could be thrown away. On the other hand, the world is in dire need of emancipated religion—deep as the ocean, vast as the sky, patient as the earth, sublime as the mountain, and shining as the light of the sun.

Let us not think that the bondage of religion results from primitive superstitions, idolatry, mythological beliefs, and incomprehensible rituals. Vivekananda would have been the last person to condemn these, even though they are not the highest expressions of the religious urge. According to him, they are necessary steps in the evolution of religion, and can be, even to this day, of great help to many earnest religious seekers. We have no right to criticize them. We should rather be grateful to them, for through centuries they have offered to thousands an easy way of comprehending supersensuous truths.

The real danger to the cause of religion has been brought about not by atheists, animists, or idolators, but by enlightened persons who claim to be faithful. Their faith, however, is less in God than in their own concepts of God. They contradict themselves by calling God great and compassionate and, at the same time, asking Him to curse and destroy those who do not conform to their dogmas. Their piety consists in the regimentation of certain formalities of worship. Their worship is superficial and vociferous, rarely leading to inwardness of mind and tranquillity. Their love is anchored in hate and the method of their unity is to enforce one creed on all by advertisement, allurement, threat, and even by fraud if necessary. The kingdom which they seek to establish on earth is not of God but of self-seeking, self-aggrandizing potentates, brandishing swords of authority and pomp. The mad man in Nietzche's *The Joyful Wisdom* was probably right when he said: 'I seek God. ... Where is God gone? I mean to tell you! We have killed him—you and I.'

How can deliverance be brought to religion? The effective measures suggested by Swami Vivekananda can be briefly summarized here. First, we have to place religion on a broad foundation. The highest function of religion is not to offer reward for faith or to forgive punishment in return for obedience, but to lead man to that infinite freedom which is God. God is not limited by time or space or the law of causation. He is changeless, eternal. 'Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God' (*Bible*, Psalm 90). The Upaniṣads declare: *'Satyaṁ jñānam anantaṁ Brahma'*—God is truth and knowledge infinite. In our common language, we say God is great. But what are the implications of God's greatness? This greatness must not be hampered by any kind of limitation. Yet how foolishly we tend to put restrictions on God! We assert that God cannot be this; He cannot be that. We love to think of God as the God of Israel, God of the Christians, God of the Hindus, and so on. We invoke the wrath of God on those who do not worship Him in a particular way. We declare that God can incarnate on earth only once, and His saving message is exhausted by a single sacred book. Let us mind the words o Vivekananda: 'Is God's Book finished? O is revelation still going on? It is a marvello Book—these spiritual revelations of the worl The Bible, the Vedas, the Koran, and all oth sacred books are but so many pages, and a infinite number of pages remain yet to be un folded. I shall leave my heart open for a of them. We stand in the present, but op ourselves to the infinite future. We take i all that has been in the past, enjoy the lig of the present, and open every window of th heart for all that will come in the futur Salutation to all the prophets of the pas to all the great ones of the present, and to a that are to come in the future!' (*Jñān yoga*: The Way to the Realization of th Universal Religion).

Religion should lead us to a God who i really great—*'bhūmā'* in the language of th Upaniṣads. No human concept can claim t have represented God completely; no word i adequate to describe Him fully. God majesty surpasses everything we can know o imagine. He is the *'neti, neti'* (not this, not this) of the Upaniṣads. Yet God is manifesting Himself through millions of forms and ideas in endless creative movements. Not a single 'point-event' in the universe can be dissociated from God. God is all. Anything that is is in God. When such a God becomes the central pivot of religion, religion is bound to be broad. It cannot be dogmatic any more. It respects all creeds, all scriptures, all forms of worship. Says Vivekananda: 'All narrow, limited, fighting ideas of religion have to go. All sectarian ideas and tribal or national ideas of religion must be given up. That each tribe or nation should have its own particular God and think that every other is wrong, is a superstition that should belong to the past. ... All that was good in the past must be preserved; and the doors must be kept open for future additions to the already existing store. ... The idea of the Personal God, the Impersonal, the Infinite, the Moral Law, the Ideal Man—these all have to come under the definition of religion. And when religions have become thus broadened, their power for good will have increased a hundredfold' (*Jñāna-yoga*: The Necessity of Religion).

We are sometimes led to think that religious broadness means adherence to some fundamental metaphysical principles which are more or less common in most religions, and rejection of those elements where there are points of discord. In our zeal for inter-religious amity we are prepared to shear religion of rituals, mythological beliefs, and many age-old practices which seem to us superstitious. Swami Vivekananda had some words of caution against such a brand of broadness:

'You cannot make all conform to the same ideas; that is a fact, and I thank God that it is so. I am not against any sect. I am glad that sects exist, and I only wish they may go on multiplying more and more. ... If we all thought alike, we should be like Egyptian mummies in a museum, looking vacantly at one another's faces—no more than that. ... When religions are dead, there will be no more sects; it will be the perfect peace and harmony of the grave. But so long as mankind thinks, there will be sects. Variation is the sign of life, and it must be there. ...

'My idea, therefore, is that all these religions are different forces in the economy of God, working for the good of mankind, and that not one can become dead, not one can be killed' (*Jñāna-yoga*: The Way to the Realization of the Universal Religion).

'Through high philosophy or low, through the most exalted mythology or the grossest, through the most refined ritualism or arrant fetishism, every sect, every soul, every nation, every religion, consciously or unconsciously, is struggling upward toward God; every vision of Truth that man has is a vision of Him and of none else' (*Jñāna-yoga*: The Ideal of a Universal Religion).

'In the first place I would ask mankind to recognize this maxim: "Do not destroy." Iconoclastic reformers do no good to the world. Break not, pull not anything down; but build. Help, if you can; if you cannot, fold your hands and stand by and see things go on. ... Secondly, take a man where he stands, and from there give him a lift' (*ibid.*).

The second factor which Swami Vivekananda thought important toward redeeming religion was to know that religion had to be lived rather than talked about. Religious enthusiasm, unfortunately, is often directed to extensive scholastic studies, theological discussions, vain argumentation or rituals mechanically participated in. We fail to realize that religion is a tangible experience of spirit. It has to be gained from day to day, and for this, tremendous self-effort, earnestness, and sacrifice are necessary. The old man, enslaved by hundreds of passions and prejudices, must die. A new man with a transparent heart has to be born. The great transforming power of religion becomes manifest only when one seriously takes it as a matter of daily practice.

'Show by your lives that religion does not mean words or names or sects, but that it means spiritual realization. Only those can understand who have felt. Only those who have attained spirituality can communicate it to others, can be great teachers of mankind. They alone are the powers of light' (Swami Vivekananda: *My Master*).

A candidly religious man is he who actually feels the presence of God within his heart at all times. Spiritual reality for him is no longer a matter for conjecture. His whole life is through and through permeated by that reality. As a consequence, he develops in his personality a wonderful love, knowledge, harmony, and peace. To him, the whole world appears to be radiating light and sweetness. No meanness, strife, selfishness, and hatred can abide in his heart. This is, indeed, the truest freedom, promised by religion. Its other name is perfection.

Swami Vivekananda would passionately talk about what he called a scientific outlook on religion. Religion aspires after a goal which is a positive attainment here and now. Man's true nature as free spirit, and God as infinite existence, consciousness, and love, are not myths or poetical fancies, but objects of effective search. Each science is an exploration of some mystery of nature. Religion is the quest for supreme Truth, the endeavour to solve the ultimate mystery of life. Religion can, and must, be tackled scientifically. Its methods should be brought on a par with those of science. Observation, experimentation, and verification should be its key-note, as with any other science.

As a science, religion is vitally linked with the well-being of man. It is unfair to say that religion is other-worldliness, escapism, or wish-fulfilment. If we can develop a positive attitude to religion, we shall find that it is a most interesting study. We shall then be able to discover the rationale of many beliefs and practices which apparently seem to be meaningless.

Let us conclude by quoting two passages from Swami Vivekananda with regard to the possibilities of emancipated religion:

'Truth is nobody's property; no race, no individual, can lay exclusive claim to it. Truth is the nature of all souls. But it has to be made practical, to be made simple, so that it may penetrate every pore of human society and become the property of the highest intellects and the commonest minds, of man, woman, and child at the same time' (*Jñāna-yoga*: Practical Vedanta IV).

'No longer will religion remain a bundle of ideas and theories or an intellectual assent; it will enter into our very self' (*Jñāna-yoga*: The Ideal of a Universal Religion).

My ideal, indeed, can be put into a few words and that is: to preach unto mankind their divinity, and how to make it manifest in every movement of life.

This world is in chains of superstition. I pity the oppressed, whether man or woman, and I pity more the oppressors. . . .

Religions of the world have become lifeless mockeries. What the world wants is character. The world is in need of those whose life is one burning love, selfless. That love will make every word tell like thunderbolt. . . .

Bold words and bolder deeds are what we want. Awake, awake, great ones! The world is burning with misery. Can you sleep? Let us call and call till the sleeping gods awake, till the god within answers to the call. What more is in life? What greater work?

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

ANTICIPATIONS OF NEO-VEDĀNTISM IN RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA

By Dr. S. C. Chatterjee

[Dr. S. C. Chatterjee, M.A., Ph.D., was formerly the Head of the Department of Philosophy of the Calcutta University. In this learned article, he shows how the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna contain the germs of a new Vedānta which is a synthesis and reconciliation of the conflicting traditional schools of Vedānta. Swami Vivekananda has developed this Neo-Vedānta, though more remains to be done in this direction, which work, he hopes, devoted scholars would take up.]

Three stages in the development of the Vedānta are generally distinguished by Indian scholars and writers on the subject. The word 'Vedānta' literally means 'the end of the Vedas', and it primarily stood for the Upaniṣads which form the concluding parts of the Vedas. But, subsequently, it has come to mean the whole range of philosophical thoughts which developed out of the Upaniṣads. In the light of this, three stages are generally distinguished in the development of Vedāntic thought in India. First, we have the creative stage represented by the revealed texts (Śruti) or the Vedic literature, chiefly consisting of the Upaniṣads. The second stage is that of systematization represented by the Brahma-Sūtras of Bādarāyaṇa, which gather, arrange, harmonize, and justify the ideas of the Upaniṣads. The third stage is that of interpretation and elaboration represented by the different commentaries on the *Brahma-Sūtra* and other works on them in which the ideas and arguments contained in the *sūtras* are cast into proper philosophical forms and an attempt is made to justify the different interpretations, as much by appeal to earlier authority as by independent reasoning. The result was that there appeared a number of schools of the Vedānta which hold different and conflicting views regarding Brahman, self, and the world. These different schools not only disputed with one another, but entered into unmitigated quarrel and rivalry among themselves to denounce and demolish one another. In the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, we seem to reach a fourth stage in the development of the Vedānta, namely, the stage of synthesis and reconciliation (*samanvaya*). It is a new type of Vedānta which reconciles not only the different systems of the Vedānta, but also different systems of philosophy and religion. In this sense it may be called Neo-Vedānta or the new Vedānta. Of course, Sri Ramakrishna only laid the basis and foundation for it, and it was left to Swami Vivekananda to build the superstructure of Neo-Vedānta on it. The object of this paper is just to bring to light some of the anticipations of Neo-Vedāntism in Sri Ramakrishna's teachings.

But before that, we should explain briefly the important points at issue among the main schools of the Vedānta. Of the many schools of the Vedānta, the Advaita of Śaṅkara is the most widely known in India and abroad. Next in point of popularity come the Viśiṣṭādvaita of Rāmānuja and the Dvaita of Madhvācārya. These are the main schools of the Vedānta. There are also other schools such as the Dvaitādvaita of Nimbārka, the Bhedābheda of Bhāskara and Caitanya, the Śuddhādvaita of Vallabha, and so on. But these are, more or less, a modification or combination of the first three mentioned here. So we shall confine ourselves to a brief statement of the different views which they hold with regard to Brahman and Māyā, the world and the individual self, and liberation and the path thereof.

In Śaṅkara's Advaita, Brahman is regarded as the only reality and as indeterminate and impersonal being without any quality or character and distinction (*nirguṇa* and *nirviśeṣa*). Brahman, associated with Its power of Māyā is called Īśvara or God who is the object of our worship. The world is an illusory appearance caused by Brahman's-power of Māyā. Māyā is the magical power of projecting the appearance of a world of many things and beings where there is really nothing but Brahman. Therefore, Brahman is the only reality, all other things including even Īśvara are only illusory appearances due to Brahman's Māyā. All this is Brahman and is really negated in Brahman. The self of man (*jīva*) is absolutely identical with Brahman. The liberation of the self from bondage to the body and the world is to be attained by the realization of its identity with Brahman. And this is to be achieved by means of knowledge of Brahman (*jñāna*), and not by devotion to God (*bhakti*), nor by religious works (*karma*).

As against Śaṅkara's Advaita, Rāmānuja in his Viśiṣṭādvaita holds that Brahman is a Personal Being and is possessed of innumerable auspicious qualities (*saguṇa* and *saviśeṣa*). Māyā is Brahman's wonderful but real power of creation of a real world, out of the unconscious matter which is a part of Brahman. The individual selves (*jīvas*) are also real parts of Brahman who is the whole. Being related to God as a part to the whole, the self is both different from and identical with God, since the whole is different from the part and yet is present in the part. The self is liberated from bondage to the body and the world, not by mere knowledge, nor by mere work, but by devotion and self-surrender to God and through God's grace. The liberated self becomes similar to God, but never identical with Him.

In Madhva's Dvaita, Brahman is a Personal Being, possessing to the full all kinds of good qualities. There is no Māyā as the illusion-producing power of God. God creates the world out of Prakṛti or the primal matter which is eternal and the material cause of the world. It is under God's control and guidance that Prakṛti evolves the world of objects. Individual souls are real and eternal beings and are conscious and active subjects. So the world and selves are as real as God Himself. They are different from and dependent on God, and not identical with Him in any sense and at any time. The liberated self resembles God in respect of certain qualities, but never becomes identical with God in essence. Liberation from bondage is to be attained not by knowledge, but by devotion to and love of God, which win God's grace; and finally, it is God's grace that liberates man.

In the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, we find some fundamental philosophical thoughts, though expressed in ordinary language and through simple examples, out of which a new form of the Vedānta may be developed. Such a Vedānta can very well synthesize and reconcile Advaita, Dvaita, and Viśiṣṭādvaita. It may be called the synthetic (*samanvayī*) Vedānta or Neo-Vedānta, and it is anticipated in the following, among others, teachings of Sri Ramakrishna.

First, Sri Ramakrishna teaches that Brahman and Śakti or Kālī (Māyā) are not two different realities unrelated to each other, nor are they different realities or existences inseparably related to each other as substance and quality. They are only two aspects of the same reality or two states of the same thing and, therefore, non-different (*abheda*). Just as the same water of the sea is sometimes moving and sometimes motionless, or the same serpent sometimes crawls and sometimes remains coiled up and motionless, so the same reality is called Kālī or Brahman, according as it does or does not create, maintain, and destroy the world. This implies that Brahman or the Absolute in one aspect is indeterminate and impersonal Being (*nirguṇa*) as the Advaitin holds, and in another, is determinate and personal God (*saguṇa*) as the Viśiṣṭādvaitin and Dvaitin affirm. It implies also that the Personal God is not an illusory appearance or a lower form of Brahman, the

Absolute, which is really indeterminate and qualityless, but only appears as determinate and qualified when associated with Māyā or covered by *avidyā* or ignorance.

Secondly, Sri Ramakrishna teaches that it is the same reality that is the nameless and formless Brahman for the *jñānin* or the man of philosophic insight, the Ātman or pure self for the *yogin* or the man absorbed in meditation, and Bhagavān or Personal God for the *bhakta* or the man of devotion. Just as the same water of the ocean is congealed into the form of ice by extreme cold and is dissolved into formless water by the heat of the sun, so reality takes on form and shape for the devotee, but is formless for the *jñānin* and the *yogin*. This means that the absolute Reality may be formless or it may have forms, so that the worship of the forms of God has not less value and validity than the worship of the formless Brahman. Sri Ramakrishna often used to illustrate the truth that God may be formless and yet may have forms by the story of the chameleon which wears different colours at different times, and sometimes, has no colour at all.

Thirdly, Sri Ramakrishna sometimes speaks of the six centres of the mind (*ṣaṭcakra*) in the human body and the seven levels of consciousness connected with them. Here he teaches that, when the mind rises to the sixth level, we have the experience of the forms of God, but when it comes up to the seventh level, it is absorbed in *samādhi* and perceives no form, no object at all. It is a state of pure consciousness in which Brahman as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss (Sat-Cit-Ānanda) is completely unified with Śakti or the divine power and nothing physical or mental exists. This implies that we get different revelations of reality from different levels of experience and that, at the highest level, there is a dissolution of the whole world of objects in one universal consciousness.

But then, he teaches that it is this universal consciousness that has become all this, it is Brahman that has become the twenty-four principles from Prakṛti down to the physical elements. Just as we leave behind us all the steps of a stair in order to mount the roof of a building and, on reaching it, find that the stair is built of just the same material as the roof is made of, so we realize Brahman by following the negative path of withdrawal from the world (*neti, neti*), but on realization, find that Brahman is present everywhere in the world. So the negation of the world is followed by its affirmation in a new light in the life of the *vijñānin* or the perfectly wise saint, if not in that of the *jñānin* or the just wise man. This is Sri Ramakrishna's fine way of illustrating spiritual truths that baffle all attempts at a logical explanation.

Now, we are to say something about the living character and burning intensity of Sri Ramakrishna's realization of the truth that all this is Brahman. This will also give us a glimpse of the practical application of Vedānta in the life and conduct of Sri Ramakrishna. For him, it is Brahman as the Divine Mother that has become everything of the world. We have his own words when we say that, for him, the earth and the heaven, the sun and the moon, the temple and the garden, the jar and the pot, the bed and the bedstand, man and woman, the young and the old, birds and beasts, in a word, all are verily so many forms and manifestations of the Divine Mother, all are Brahman and beam with the effulgence of the Divine *cit* or consciousness. He would see the cat as a form of his Divine Mother and give it the offerings to Mother Kālī to eat, although that was against the conventional rules of sanctity that attaches to such things and was, therefore, reported against by the care-taker of the temple of Goddess Kālī. Sri Ramakrishna felt the presence of God even in the blades of grass, and at times, could not tread upon them and would be pained if they were trodden upon by others. The oneness of all existence was a living experience for him so much so that his body bore the marks of a slap given to a man in a boat on the river Gaṅgā, quite at a distance from him. He realized the presence of God in the poor as much as in the rich and so taught that we are not to be *kind* to the poor, but *serve* the God that is in them or the God that they *are*, with due reverence. Such was the unique realization of Sri Ramakrishna that 'all this is Brahman' (*sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ Brahma*). It is not, as the Śāṅkarite would say, that there is no all, but only Brahman. For Sri Ramakrishna, all *are*, and are Brahman in different forms.

We may mention here what may be called Sri Ramakrishna's argument in support of the view that all *are* and are Brahman in different forms. Ramakrishna used to say that just as to find the total weight of a *bel*-fruit we have to put together its kernel, stones, and skin, so to know the Absolute fully and comprehensively, we have to admit its different revelations from different levels of consciousness, such as waking, dreaming, deep sleep, and *turīya* or the superconscious or transcendent. So he says: 'I admit all—Brahman, Māyā, *jīva* or self, and *jagat* or the world; otherwise, there will be something less than the total weight.' This implies that the absolute Reality is Brahman as qualified by, and inclusive of, the world of selves, living beings and non-living things. Here, Sri Ramakrishna metaphorically expresses an accepted principle of philosophy that reality includes all actual and possible objects of thought and experience.

Then Sri Ramakrishna teaches that just as the same person may be a father or brother or son in relation to different persons, so God in relation to the *jñānin* or man of philosophic insight, in whom the ego disappears, is non-different from the self, but in relation to the *bhakta* or devotee, in whom the ego persists, He is different from the self of man. But both these relations of difference and non-difference between self and God are true, the one in the sphere of His sportive creative activity, (*līlā-rūpa*), the other in the sphere of His essential immutable being (*nitya-rūpa*). In His *līlā-rūpa*, He multiplies His joy in man and enjoys it as man's love for God. In his *nitya-rūpa*, He obliterates the distinction between man and God and abides as the one self in all.

Coming last to the paths of liberation, we see that Sri Ramakrishna reconciles *karma*, *jñāna*, *bhakti*, and *yoga*. He says that just as the temple of Kālī at Dakshineswar may be reached by boat or car or on foot, so the supreme Being may be experienced or realized by disinterested work or philosophic knowledge or sincere devotion or deep concentration. And with this, one attains liberation or freedom from sin and suffering, and experiences eternal peace and bliss. So, there need be no controversy and quarrel among the Advaitins, Dvaitins, and Viśiṣṭādvaitins with regard to the path of liberation. Any one or more or all of these paths, if followed sincerely and entirely, will lead to the same goal namely, supreme felicity and blessedness. The only difference between the Advaitins and the other Vedāntins is that, while the former want to be one with, and absorbed in Brahman as bliss or *ānanda*, the latter want to enjoy the bliss of communion with Brahman and not *be* Brahman, just as, says Sri Ramakrishna, some people may like *to be* sugar and others may like to taste sugar.

The teachings of Sri Ramakrishna thus contain the germs of a new Vedānta which may very well turn out to be a synthesis and reconciliation of the conflicting traditional schools of Vedānta. Swami Vivekananda has gone a great way in developing this Neo-Vedānta in his lectures and writings on the subject. But more remains to be done. It is only to be desired that other competent and devoted scholars should take up the task and go ahead in the same direction.

THE KARMA-YOGA OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

By Dr. Anima Sen Gupta

[Dr. Anima Sen Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., of Patna University, shows in her thoughtful article how Swami Vivekananda has emphasized the importance of selfless work, not only for the common good of the people, but also for one's own emancipation. When action is spiritualized, it ceases to be a bondage, and leads to the highest realization, where it is one with pure knowledge.]

Swami Vivekananda was a true seeker and lover of Brahman—the Bliss. In his opinion, *lokasaṅgraha*, the magnificent social expression of divine love, was an excellent form of worship of the Supreme. He believed that, through sheer selfless and disinterested humanitarian service, a person can reach the supreme goal coveted by the wise. Swami Vivekananda has wonderfully harmonized the path of selfless service with the path of knowledge. He has also offered us a unique interpretation of Advaita Vedānta, keeping in view both the fundamental position of the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara and the pressing demands of the new world. Such a work is only possible by a super-normal personality with a penetrating insight. For the first time, Swamiji gave us the idea that both spirituality and service are complementary ideals of the Vedānta, and that Advaita Vedānta is capable of bringing into harmony all religions, only when both spirituality and service are regarded as twin principles of this order.

ADVAITA VEDANTA AS COMMONLY UNDERSTOOD

The general view regarding Advaita Vedānta is that, according to this school, knowledge alone constitutes the direct means to liberation. Selfless service simply purifies the soul and makes it fit for receiving spiritual knowledge. One who has entered into the stage of *sannyāsa* gives up all forms of actions, as actions are meaningless to him in the final stage. The results that issue forth from actions are non-eternal. The *sannyāsin*, who with a purified mind has engaged himself in the search for eternal Truth, has naturally no need for various worldly things, including the results of actions (which are only transitory and non-eternal). Actions or fruits of actions can be of four forms: *utpādya, āpya, saṁskārya,* and *vikārya*.

In the case of *utpādya-karma,* the material stuff produces an effect without undergoing any change in its nature—as for example, cloth produced from threads. When the action does not produce any change in the object of the action, it is known as *āpya-karma*—as Devadatta's seeing the jar. When the action produces some *saṁskāra* or specific quality in the object of the action, it is called *saṁskārya-karma.* As for instance, in order to make the sacrificial cake, one has got to sprinkle water on the unhusked rice. In *vikārya-karma,* the material cause undergoes modification to produce the effect; for example, milk changing into curd.

But Brahman is uncaused, ever attained, eternal, pure, devoid of change, and imperfections. So, it cannot be regarded as any one of these four forms of action or fruits of actions; and if *Brahmaprāpti* is not the result of any kind of action, then why should one, seeking to attain the highest and the greatest only, desire to follow the path of action?

Tasmāt na karmasādhyatvaṁ
Brahmaṇo'sti kutaścana;
Karmasādhyaṁ tvanityaṁ hi
Brahmanityaṁ Sanātanaṁ
(*Sarva-Vedānta-Siddhānta-Sāra-Saṅgraha*).

Knowledge alone is the gateway to liberation and there is nothing else that can lead a man straightway to his desired goal.

Jñānādeva tu kaivailyam
Iti śrutyā nigadyate; ...
Mumukṣor yujyate tyāgaḥ
Kathaṁ vihitakarmaṇaḥ;
Iti śaṅkā na kartavyā
Mūḍhavat paṇḍitottamaiḥ (*ibid.*).

This is how the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara is generally interpreted and understood by the teachers and the taught of Indian philosophy.

KARMA-YOGA AS INTERPRETED BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Now, let us see how the great Swami Vivekananda has interpreted *karma-yoga* so as to synthesize service with knowledge, both of which, in his opinion, are equally potent to lead a man to his desired goal (i.e. freedom of the soul or *mokṣa*). Swamiji has declared emphatically that the grandest idea of the Vedānta is its synthetic view so far as paths to liberation are concerned. 'The grandest idea in the religion of the Vedānta is that we may reach the same goal by different paths and these paths I have generalized into four—viz. those of work, love, psychology, and knowledge. Each blends into the other. These divisions are made according to the type or tendency that may be seen to prevail in a man. In the end, all these four paths *converge and become one.*' The general view of the Advaitins that knowledge and action cannot meet together (*jñāna-karmaṇoḥ sahayogah na ghaṭate*) has not found favour with this great *karmayogin* of India. On the other hand, Swamiji has taught us that action, understood in its proper spirit, can be synthesized very effectively with knowledge, and that there is no antagonism between the two. The only thing that is essential for us to do is to learn the secret of *karma-yoga*. Action in itself, is neither good nor bad. It has no inherent moral qualities. It becomes good or bad, efficacious for freedom or obstacle to freedom, only due to purity or impurity of motive from which it springs. If the motive behind an action is selfish, it is bad; if the motive is wholly unselfish, the action is both good and conducive to spiritual freedom. The secret of *karma-yoga* is nothing but spiritualization of service by cultivating the attitude of selfless devotion to life divine. The pursuit of *karma-yoga* lies in making actions free of all *rājasika* interests, and also, in shifting the motive from narrow egoism to the infinite bliss that supports the whole world. Action, performed in this attitude of humility, devotion, and selfless love for the whole universe, is nothing but a form of spiritual *sādhanā* which is wholly beneficial to liberation. In his eagerness for proving the efficacy of *karma-yoga*, Swamiji has gone so far as to declare: 'The *karmayogin* need not believe in any doctrine whatsoever. He may not believe even in God, may not ask what his soul is, nor think of any metaphysical speculation. He has got his own special aim of realizing selflessness; and he has to work it out himself. Every moment of his life must be realization, because he has to solve by mere work, without the help of doctrine or theory, the very same problem to which the *jñānin* applies his reason and inspiration and *bhakta* his love.'

If we reflect deeply on *karma-yoga* as interpreted by Vivekananda, and also by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*, we find that selfless action is the dynamic side of spiritual freedom, which is already an accomplished fact. It is not a fact that spiritual freedom arises as an effect from selfless service. Unless one has made his soul wholly free from the distracting influences of egoism and narrow individuality, he is not to be called a perfect *karmayogin*. It is the sense of egoism (*ahaṅkāra* and *abhimāna*) that really constitutes the bondage of the soul. To remove this egoism, one has to have recourse to *karma-yoga*, which cleanses the soul of its defilement, and thereby, reveals its essentially free nature. So, in this case also removal of the obscuring tendencies of *avidyā* by means of constant performance of selfless actions simply helps one to open the closely-tight cover of the golden pot in which the nectar of immortality is to be found in abundance. The freedom of the soul is always present. It is not a thing to be acquired; it has only to be revealed by the practice of *karma-yoga.* As there is no cause-effect relationship between knowledge and spiritual freedom, so also there is no such relationship between *karma-yoga* and the freedom of the soul. Both knowledge and selfless service are capable of removing *avidyā* that hides the real nature of Ātman by covering it with the dark spell of egoism. Destruction of this egoism is *mokṣa. Avidyā* and egoism constitute two points of view from which the root cause of bondage can be visualized and verbalized.

Since destruction of egoism is necessary for the proper performance of selfless action, a *karmayogin,* too, is in a position to attain liberation by following the path of egoless actions. The Advaita Vedānta does not preach that action under all conditions is a snare and that the world is to be dismissed as an illusion. Action is not to be renounced totally; rather it is to be performed in the world with the inner life wholly dedicated to the eternal spirit.

ŚANKARA AND SELFLESS SERVICE

Śaṅkara's view on selfless action has been very aptly elucidated by him in his commentary on the *Bhagavad-Gītā.* Inertia is not freedom, and freedom, also, does not logically lead to inertia and inactivity. Commenting on the second *śloka* of the sixth chapter of the *Gītā,* Śaṅkara has said: *'Asti paramārtha sannyāsena sādṛśyaṁ kartṛdvārakaṁ karmayogasya.'* That is to say, there is similarity between *sannyāsa* and *karma-yoga* since, in both, the giving up of ego-sense is absolutely necessary. *Karma-yoga* can be linked with the stage of *sannyāsa* in which the wise sage will perform actions not for his own welfare (not even aiming at his own *cittaśuddhi* for liberation), but for the welfare of the whole of mankind. Just as a true *karmayogin* gives up the habit of doing actions for his own self, rejecting completely the idea of his separate being, in the same manner, the enlightened person gives up the habit of doing such actions which result from the false identification of the soul with the limited body-mind system. Whenever Śaṅkara has described the relation between knowledge and action as one of opposition, he has considered action in the sense of deeds performed with the intention of enjoying pleasures and happiness of this world or of the other world. Total annihilation of the feeling of *sva* (mine) is absolutely necessary for spiritualization of service.

In fact, Śaṅkara has admitted that there is no objection to the performance of selfless action, even after the attainment of wisdom (see Śaṅkara commentary on the *Gītā,* III. 8, 20). In the stage of *sannyāsa,* the soul loses all ego-centric hankerings for worldly pleasures, and for that reason, the ordinary incentives to worldly actions no longer exist for him. He forsakes completely his habit of doing actions in the worldly-way, and hence he is a doer of action in name only. Truly speaking, the doer of action is one who thinks of himself as the sole agent and designer of the deed due to ignorance. When one is free from ignorance, his action assumes the form of *sādhanā* and ceases to be a source of bondage. To link one's life with the life of divinity is not only to lose one's existence as an individual, but also to regain one's reality as egoless spirituality. His psycho-physical frame, then, assumes for him the form of a spiritual lyre, each string of which is attuned to the great music of the world. Whatever he does, at once, changes into divine service performed through his mind-body system. Hence, there is no incompatibility between *jñāna-yoga* and *karma-yoga,* even though Vedānta declares that in the stage of *sannyāsa,* there is the destruction of *karma,* meaning thereby the destruction of all actions springing from the sense of individuality and egoism. This is, indeed, a stage when a person can be admitted as a non-doer even though he performs humanitarian services. Separateness of the deed from the doer exists only so long as the sense of egohood persists. But when a person has no sense of I and mine, he has no sense of ownership of actions, and consequently, he has no feeling of separation between himself and his action. He is divine, his action is also divine, and there is nothing for him but Divinity manifesting itself through sights and sounds, love and hate, knowledge and services of the world.

In the *Naiṣkarmya-Siddhi*, it has been stated that, just as a lamb cannot stay in the same place with a lion without being devoured by it, in the same manner, knowledge and action cannot be linked together due to their incompatible nature.

Here, too, the author of the said text has meant by action only those which spring from a false sense of agency, due to beginningless ignorance. When an individual has made himself totally free from the sense of agency, he does nothing, even though he keeps himself engaged in disinterested social service. Social service, discharged in a spirit of detachment or divine service, can never be regarded as a snare, because this type of work is not prompted by the individual's desire for his own happiness (*svakalyāṇa buddhi*). Even God acts in this world for the sake of world maintenance and progress. Just as God never becomes bound by his actions, in the same manner, the *sannyāsin*, who has emptied himself of all egocentric desires, does not bind himself by his egoless actions. As he has no selfish motive, he lays claim to nothing and surrenders himself wholly to the supreme Being. Action, understood in this sense, has no antagonism with knowledge and is, therefore, not destructible by knowledge. In fact, such service is nothing but knowledge viewed from the dynamic aspect of life.

CONCLUSION

Thus, from the above discussion, it is clear that service can be synthesized with knowledge even from the Advaitic point of view, if, by service, we mean only those actions which are done by the wise sage for *lokasaṅgraha*. Actions are not his duties in the sense that they are obligatory on him. On the other hand, any humanitarian service done by the wise is a spontaneous manifestation, in a dynamic form, of the nectar of wisdom that he has drunk. He becomes the master of all actions by cultivating detachment and faith in the Absolute. The freed soul works for the guidance of men who are still steeped in ignorance. He is the doer of work and is yet not the doer, because he has no sense of 'I' and 'mine'.

If the individual soul is Brahman (as has been asserted by the Advaita Vedānta), then service to individual soul (*jīva*) is service to Brahman. The individual soul is the symbol (*pratīka*) through which Brahman is worshipped. The individual soul is, however, associated with the body-mind organism, and so, this body-mind organism must be properly nursed and purified if any real service is to be rendered to the indwelling spirit. Keeping this in view, the wise sage works spontaneously for the betterment of all the living conditions of the *jīva*.

Hence, from this point of view, the humanitarian services performed by a *sannyāsin* are nothing but the spontaneous fulfilment of the divine purpose through a perfected personality. The secret of *karma-yoga* is the annihilation of *ahaṁkāra* and the attunement of one's being to the purpose of divine life. Service in a detached spirit is the outer side of spirituality and knowledge is the inner side. So, the two can go together as the outer and inner aspects of the same spiritual process. The very subtle metaphysical distinction between the self-effacement of *niṣkāma-karma* and the self-negation of *Brahma-jñāna* loses its meaning when viewed from the standpoint of psychology and practical life.

Even Śaṅkara had to work hard for reorganizing Hindu society on the new model of Advaita Vedānta, although he was a *jīvanmukta puruṣa*. He had also founded *maṭhas* in various places so as to facilitate propagation of his views among masses in different parts of India. When Śaṅkara himself did so much humanitarian service in his own life, how can it be proper for us to maintain that the stage of *sannyāsa* is a stage of perfect inactivity? Swami Vivekananda has rightly remarked: 'The Vedānta ... as a religion must be intensely practical. We must be able to carry it out in every part of our life. And not only this, the fictitious differentiation between religion and the life of the world must vanish, for the Vedānta teaches oneness of life throughout. The ideals of religion must cover the whole field of life, they must enter into our thoughts and more and more into practice.' When truth is fully realized, realization finds spontaneous expression through thought, feeling, and emotion of the perfected personality inspiring him to undertake magnificent services for human good.

Of course, it is true that a *jivanmukta-puruṣa* does not consider himself either as a Brāhmaṇa or as a Kṣatriya; nor does he consider himself either as rich or poor. He is devoid of these sorts of *abhimāna*. Nevertheless, he retains one *abhimāna* which he is not able to get rid of, unless his *prārabdha karmas* are fully exhausted. This is his awareness of himself as a man (*naratvābhimāna*). It is because he is a perfected human being that all the excellences of mind befitting a man are freely manifested through all his truly humanitarian activities. He, then, becomes the most benevolent saviour of the suffering humanity. This is precisely the attitude adopted by the great Swami. He has rejected the idea of the selfish salvationism and quietism and has preached again and again that the ideal of a *sannyāsin* is 'service to humanity'. He himself has said that Śaṅkara has kept his Advaita confined to those *sannyāsins* who have decided to live out of the world, i.e. in caves and mountains. The principal duty and mission of a *sannyāsin's* life is to sow the seeds of oneness of soul even in the soil of the life of the worldly people by teaching and preaching to them the secret of *karma-yoga.*

The discrepancy between knowledge and action arises only when action is not understood in its proper spirit. When action is spiritualized, it ceases to be an action in the ordinary sense and can very well be synthesized with wisdom or knowledge. Hence, in the opinion of Swami Vivekananda, one who is able to realize the *advaita-tattva,* feels an urge to make sincere endeavour, with a view to awakening that realization in others. It is only when the *sannyāsin* enters into the worldly stage, being equipped with *Brahma-jñāna* and *karma sādhanā,* that he gets full scope for realizing his oneness with the whole world. When the whole world is completely encompassed by his own being, he feels an intense urge to work for the welfare of all (just as in the bound state, one feels an intense longing for doing such actions as are conducive to one's own good). To realize the oneness of all souls through disinterested service to humanity is what Swamiji has called practical Vedānta. This practical Vedānta, indeed, is the only form in which the teachings of Śaṅkara can be moulded without contradiction, so as to become a world-religion, the saving knowledge of humanity for ages to come.

It is not possible to do full justice to the great life of Swami Vivekananda in a short article. Deeper than his genius, greater than his eloquence, even higher than his sacrifice is the character of the man, which at once excites our wonder and admiration, love and respect. That which made his character so great and noble was the belief that man was divine, and selfless service to him was the highest form of worship. To India, Swami Vivekananda has left a legacy which will sustain her for centuries.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: THE SPIRITUAL TEACHER OF MODERN INDIA

By Swami Ranganathananda

[Swami Ranganathananda is the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. This article has been condensed out of a speech delivered at a public meeting held in Calcutta in observance of the Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda by the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.]

Swami Vivekananda came in the unbroken line of spiritual teachers from the Vedic period to the modern age. It is they who imparted the energy and direction peculiar to Indian culture—its deep spirituality. It is because they came age after age that our nation is still alive, in spite of invasions, subjections, humiliations, and devastations, a fraction of which has destroyed many a nation and many a culture. But we still exist, not only exist, but are strong and vital, thanks to the periodic touch of these master-minds. Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda brought youthfulness to the age-old Indian cultural experiment. By the end of the eighteenth century, India had become old and effete, broken and dispirited; but with the touch of Swami Vivekananda, old India became young once again. In the language of the late Dr. Brojendra Nath Seal, 'India is ever-aging but never old'. At each critical period in our history, a great man has appeared and imparted a new energy and vigour to the nation, enabling it to become young again. This is the historic and cultural significance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's statement in the *Gītā*: '*Sambhavāmi yuge yuge*—I shall be born again and again.' And this was what happened in India at the end of the last century. Through the touch of Swami Vivekananda, the Indian nation became youthful. And according to Indian philosophy, he who imparts youthfulness, vigour, and clarity of vision to a man or to a nation is the *guru* of that man or that nation. In this sense, the Swami was really the Rāṣṭraguru and also something more. He did the same service to the West as well. Through such service in both the hemispheres, he united humanity through the thread of divinity within all men and women. And he achieved this stupendous task within a brief span of ten years in his short thirty-nine years, five months, and eighteen days of earthly life. He became a bridge between the East and the West, the old and the new.

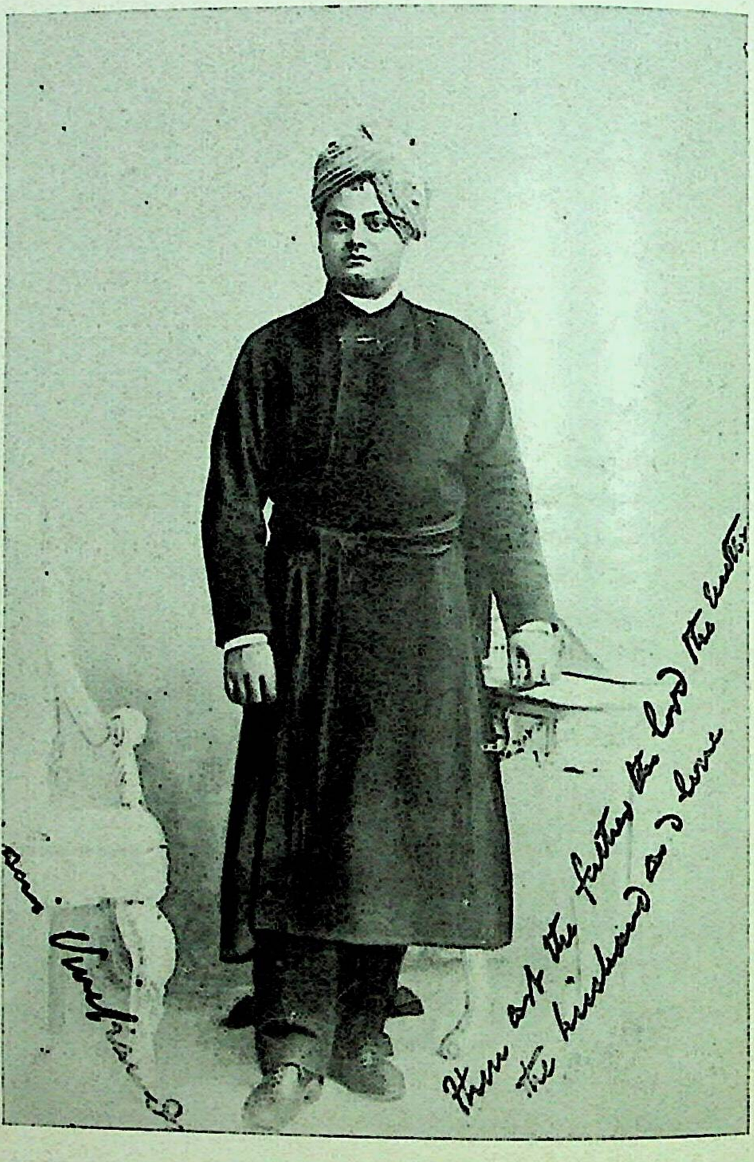
Swami Vivekananda was, in every sense of the term, a world spiritual teacher. All his work in the East or the West was to summon men and women to their spiritual heritage. In line with the great sages and seers of this country, Swamiji taught men and women to realize the Divine that is embodied in man. All his activities in every part of the country and abroad have this one single objective. Whether he spoke of India's poverty, backwardness, untouchability, and the need for her industrial development, or whether he spoke in the West about the need to practise toleration in matters of religion, his primary object was to give to man the priceless gift of *ātmajñāna*, Self-knowledge, to make man realize the Ātman, the Divine that is within. The way he developed a comprehensive spirituality out of this great Vedāntic idea is something unique.

Religion has come to mean something very narrow in recent times. But when we speak of religion in connection with Swami Vivekananda, there is nothing narrow or exclusive about it, nothing negative about it; it is pure spirituality. So far as India is concerned, this has been the teaching of her great masters, the sages of the Upaniṣads and the teacher of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. They taught us to view religion as a matter of *anubhava* or spiritual realization. 'Religion is being and becoming,'

(Madras, February 1897)

'There are good souls, calm and magnanimous, who do good to others as does the spring, and who, having themselves crossed this dreadful ocean of birth and death, help others also to cross the same, without any motive whatsoever.'

Sri Sankara


Thou art the father the lord the mother
the husband and love

(Chicago, September 1893)

'I have a message to the West as Buddha had a message to the East.'

said Swami Vivekananda. It does not consist in doctrines and creeds, dogmas and churches and temples, but it consists in a struggle to realize the Divine within us. It is from this point of view that he defines religion as the 'manifestation of the divinity already in man'. According to him, the destruction of bondage, external as well as internal, constitutes the whole scope of religion, and he expounds this idea in all his lectures and discourses.

To bring humanity to an awareness of this great fact was the main work of Swami Vivekananda in the East and the West. This is the work of true religion. It was done by the great sages of the Upaniṣads, by Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by Buddha, by Śaṅkara, and by the large galaxy of reformers of the Middle Ages, in the past, and by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, in our time. It is this role of a spiritual teacher that shone through him when he addressed the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893; he reminded that august audience that man is not a sinner, that he is not a creature of circumstances, but that he is a spark of the Divine. This is the saving message of Indian wisdom. And so, while addressing the whole of modern humanity through that Parliament, he said: 'Allow me to call you, brethren, by that sweet name—heirs of immortal bliss. Yea, the Hindu refuses to call you sinners. Ye are the children of God, the sharers of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Ye, divinities on earth—sinners! It is a sin to call a man so: it is a standing libel on human nature. Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep; you are souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal; ye are not matter, ye are not bodies; matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter.'

Therefore, as already said, it was this work of awakening of the human spirit from the sleep of ignorance and delusion that Swamiji accomplished in the East and the West. But the method he adopted to achieve this end was different in the two hemispheres. In India, he saw that the work of awakening was needed primarily in the socio-political field. He saw that the Indian man and woman had to be educated into the values of citizenship, of social awareness, into the capacities for practical efficiency and organized co-operative efforts. The creation of such free and self-disciplined citizens was the aim of his message of practical Vedānta. Virtues and graces so gained alone can become the basis of the highest spiritual development of man. Without this moral basis, religion becomes cheap, and spirituality a sham. So, when he spoke of religion in India, he used a beautiful expression to characterize its content; he called it 'man-making religion'. Similarly, he called his scheme of education for India 'man-making education'. He wanted to make men of us; he saw that the masses of India had not achieved the full glory of human beings; if the Indian people cannot co-operate with each other, if they cannot help each other, if they cannot try to bring out the best from each other, how can they achieve the glory of human existence? Manliness connotes the virtues of strength, freedom, mutual help and appreciation, and equality. Man-making education and man-making religion are meant to create a pattern of excellence in the society as well as within its individual members. The concept of man and of his excellence in Swami Vivekananda's thought is the most progressive among such concepts today.

This was a man-making message; it combines man-making religion with man-making education. The Swami called it 'Practical Vedānta'. Vedānta we have in our books; Vedānta we have seen in the lives of the great sages and saints of our country; but Vedānta as a sheet-anchor of nation-building, of a dynamic social policy, by which the masses become transformed into dynamic centres of all-round social development—this type of practical application of Vedānta we had never witnessed in our country. It was the supreme glory of Swami Vivekananda that he broadcasted the life-giving message of Vedānta to one and all.

'These conceptions of the Vedānta must come out,' he said, 'must remain not only in the forest, not only in the cave, but they must come out to work at the bar and the bench, in the pulpit and in the cottage of the poor man, with the fishermen that are catching fish, and with the students that are studying. They call to every man, woman, and child, whatever be their occupation, wherever they may be. If the fisherman thinks he is the Spirit, he will be a better fisherman; if the student thinks he is the Spirit, he will be a better student; if the lawyer thinks he is the Spirit, he will be a better lawyer, and so on. If you teach Vedānta to the fisherman, he will say, "I am as good a man as you, I am a fisherman, you are a philosopher, but I have the same God in me, as you have in you". And that is what we want, no privilege for anyone, equal chances for all; let everyone be taught that the Divine is within, and everyone will work out his own salvation.'

This is the universal message of Vedānta which Swami Vivekananda proclaimed from the house-tops in the East and the West. In this great message, Swamiji emphasized two values, which he considered the central values of Indian culture and civilization. And they are *tyāga*, renunciation, and *sevā*, service. He gave a compressed statement of the central values of Indian culture when he said: 'Renunciation and service are the twin ideals of India. Intensify her in those channels, the rest will take care of itself.'

For the past fifteen years, we have been enjoying political freedom. Can we say good-bye to these ideals today? Can the nation achieve greatness and glory without continuous inspiration provided by the values of renunciation and service? But it looks as if we as a people have begun to feel that renunciation and service were necessary only in the context of struggle for political freedom; but now that freedom is achieved, we can do without them. This grievously wrong conclusion is our biggest national problem today. If all the problems that have been accumulating around us for the last fifteen years are analysed closely, it will be revealed that the root of all our troubles is the fading of this spirit of renunciation and service in post-independence India. Today, we need to inspire ourselves with this ideal once again. We cannot bulid up this great country, we cannot destroy its backwardness, and make a truly progressive state, we cannot establish that hegemony of man over the environment, which is the meaning of freedom, until our people are once again inspired by this vision of renunciation and service. The best of human achievements proceed from us when we least think of ourselves. 'Not I but thou' is always the law of man's higher life. 'He that findeth his life shall lose it,' says Jesus, 'and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.' This has been the teaching of the great masters, both in the East and the West. Today, the country needs the ministrations of the spirit of Swami Vivekananda. Our national development plans, our various community projects, our every department of national activity, needs men and women inspired by the vision, not of their own little selves, but of the larger self of society. We have to learn to live and act in a national development awareness and perspective.

Let the people of India today be inspired by this message of renunciation—renunciation of the little self, manifestation of the higher Self, and its positive expression of service. Renounce the *kaccā* ego, and manifest the *pukkā* ego, as Sri Ramakrishna expresses it. Then only can a man establish harmony with his fellowmen and with the rest of creation: it alone enables a man to co-operate with others and work for general welfare. This alone makes possible national solidarity and integration. National life, intensified by these two forces, will express the purest and the best in its heritage; and they will stand guarantee to the continued unity and strength of the nation.

THE PLACE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

By Dr. Roma Chaudhuri

[Dr. Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., D.Phil., the Principal of Lady Brabourne College, Calcutta, is a renowned writer on philosophical subjects. In this learned article, she shows through her scholarly analytical treatment that Swami Vivekananda's contribution to Vedānta philosophy is unique and he deserves a place of originality in it.]

Swami Vivekananda, the herald of resurgent India, has truly said: 'Religion, and religion alone, is the life of India; and when that goes, India will die, in spite of politics, in spite of social reforms, in spite of Kubera's wealth poured upon the head of every one of her children.' And how repeatedly does he assert, with firm, unflinching faith, that India is the spiritual mother of the whole world, from time immemorial: 'Study the history of the whole world, and you will see that every high ideal you meet with anywhere had its origin in India. From time immemorial, India has been the mine of precious ideas to human society; giving birth to high ideas herself, she has freely distributed them broadcast over the whole world.' About the future destiny of India, the Swami says: 'This is the great ideal before us, and every one must be ready for it—the conquest of the whole world by India.' 'Up India,' he exhorts, 'and conquer the world with your spirituality.' But he also realized that before she could do that, she must herself 'gather her scattered spiritual forces'. So he devoted himself fervently to the task of revitalizing the age-old religion and philosophy of India.'

The question naturally arises: What form of spiritualism did he teach? What system of philosophy, religion, and ethics? What, in short, is his place in Indian philosophy? All indications show that his leanings were towards the Advaita view. In fact, by the term 'Vedānta', he means the Advaita-Vedānta. Now, let us very briefly consider his views regarding Brahman, *jīva, jagat,* their relation, and *mokṣa* and *sādhanā*.

BRAHMAN

Brahman, according to Swamiji, is one. But in what exact sense? According to all the schools of the Vedānta, the first and the foremost, the most fundamental and the most universal characteristic of Brahman is that He is *'ekamevādvitīyam*—one only without a second' (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad,* VI.2.1.). In Monistic schools of the Vedānta, this celebrated *mantra* occupies the central place, naturally. But what about the other schools? How can these assert that *jīva-jagat,* are as real as Brahman, yet say, too, that Brahman is 'one only, without a second'? However, this is exactly what these schools do, and the explanation offered is that Brahman is, undoubtedly, 'one only, without a second', for neither *jīva,* nor *jagat* can ever be Brahman Himself—being only parts, attributes, powers of Brahman, and not Brahman Himself. Thus, oneness of Brahman may be taken from two standpoints—from the literal or primary sense, where 'oneness' means oneness of an abstract One, or one without *svagatabhedas*; again, from the figurative or secondary sense, when oneness means the oneness of a concrete one, or 'a whole comprising parts'. In this way, in Monistic Vedānta, Brahman is 'one', and not a whole which, necessarily, implies parts. But, according to the Monotheistic Vedānta, Brahman is a whole comprising parts or an organic whole, or a concrete unity.

According to Swamiji, Brahman is one in the most literal Monistic sense, and not a whole, in the secondary, Monotheistic sense. He, in fact, seems to accept the Māyāvāda of Monistic Vedānta. Compare the following: 'Brahman is one, but is, at the same time, appearing to us as many on the relative plane. Name and form are at the root of this relativity. For instance, what do you find when you abstract name and form from a jar?

Only earth, which is its essence. Similarly, through delusion, you are thinking of and seeing a jar, a cloth, a monastery, and so on. The phenomenal world depends on this nescience, which obstructs knowledge and which has no real existence. One sees variety, such as wife, children, body, mind—only in the world created by nescience, by means of name and form. As soon as this nescience is removed, the realization of Brahman which eternally exists is the result.' Again: 'There is only one Existence—Brahman. You are but seeing That under different forms and names, through the veil of name and form, which are unreal.' This is but the Advaita-Vedānta view of Vivartavāda or the Theory of Apparent Creation, and Māyāvāda or the Theory of Nescience.

Then, like an Advaitin, Swamiji says that Brahman is *nirguṇa*. 'Brahman is the last generalization to which we can come. It has no attributes, but is Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss.' Thus Brahman has only a *svarūpa* or essence of His own—i.e. He is *sat-cit-ānanda-svarūpa,* or, as mentioned above, Existence (Sat), Knowledge (Cit), and Bliss (Ānanda) in essence or nature.

In this connection, Swamiji says something new that is not found in the Advaita-Vedānta at all, viz. that 'Brahman is ānanda, i.e. bliss, which is the same thing as love' (V. 301).*

Now, this concept of *love* is absolutely foreign to the very spirit of the Advaita-Vedānta. It is found only in the later Vaiṣṇava theories. So, not a single mention of the word 'love' (*prema* or *prīti*) is found in the Advaita-Vedānta. For, love is personal, love is dualistic, love is emotional; and all these, as is well known, are impossible here. '*Ānanda*', here, is quite a different thing. It is taken to be absolutely impersonal, non-dualistic, and unemotional in nature by the Advaitavādins.

However, this seems to be a mere difference in words. For Swamiji also, in common with the Advaitavādins, says: 'But no sooner is the essence of Cit realized, than the essence of Ānanda is also realized. Because what is Cit is, verily, the same as Ānanda' (V. 301).

This is exactly the Advaita-Vedānta view. For, in reply to the Sāṅkhya criticism that one and the same thing cannot have *three* essences, it is pointed out by the Vedāntists that Sat, Cit, Ānanda are, by no means, three different essences, rather, they are three aspects of the very same essence. Hence it is that Sat means Cit, Cit means Ānanda.

But, finally, Brahman is One 'from whom speech, along with the mind turns back, not getting Him at all—*yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha*' (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad,* II.4). He can only be realized by the soul, but cannot be conceived of by the mind or described by speech. So Swamiji says: 'Any imagination, any concept is in vain. *Neti, neti* (not this, not this) is all that can be said, for even to think is to limit and so to lose' (VII. 72).

ĪŚVARA

Here, also, Swamiji's views tally perfectly with Advaita-Vedānta. For example: 'The Personal God is the same Absolute looked at through the haze of Māyā. When we approach Him with the five senses, we can see Him only as the Personal God. ... The idea is that the Self cannot be objectified. How can the knower know itself? But it can cast a shadow, as it were, if that can be called objectification. So, the highest form of that shadow, that attempt at objectifying itself, is the Personal God' (V. 193).

To the question 'Does the Personal God belong to Māyā?' Swamiji's answer is: 'Yes, the Personal God is the same as the Absolute, seen through Māyā. The Absolute under the control of Nature is what is called the Īśvara or the Personal God' (V. 224).

As we know, according to the Advaita

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* The bracketed references to quotations indicate the volume and the page number of *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda.*

Vedānta view, Īśvara or the Personal God of religion, the Creator God of cosmology, is Himself due to Māyā, in common with *jīva-jagat*; and so, from the *pāramārthika* or transcendental standpoint, Īśvara, *jīva*, and *jagat* are simultaneously negated as *mithyā* or false —Brahman, the impersonal Absolute alone remains as the final *satya* or Reality.

CREATION

Here, too, Swamiji seems to accept what he calls the Vedānta view of creation, viz. the Advaita-Vedānta view of apparent creation or Vivartavāda. According to this doctrine, the whole world is an illusion, just like the rope-snake illusion. Thus, when we mistake a rope for a snake, we apparently see a snake very clearly for the time being, but, really, the rope has not become transformed into a snake, even for a single moment; the rope is a rope always, whatever be our wrong perception. Thus, only apparently, the rope has become a snake, but really it is always a rope. In the very same manner, we mistake Brahman for the universe of souls and matter. But the unchangeable Brahman has never become actually transformed into the universe. So, here, there is only an apparent transformation, never a real one.

In the very same strain, Swamiji also says: 'A changeable God would be no God. To avoid this doctrine of Pantheism, there is a very bold theory of the Vedānta. It is that this universe as we know and think of does not exist, that the unchangeable has not changed, that the whole of this universe is a mere appearance, and not reality, that this idea of parts, and little beings, and differentiations, is only apparent, not the nature of the thing itself. God has not changed at all, and has not become the universe at all. We see God as the universe, because we have to look through time, space, and causation. It is time, space, and causation that make this differentiation apparently, but not really. This is a very bold theory, indeed' (I. 417).

JIVA AND JAGAT

The question and answer quoted earlier (V. 224) will show that here, too, Swamiji subscribes to the Advaita-Vedānta view. Compare also the following: 'Paramātman, as ruling Māyā, is Īśvara; Paramātman, as under Māyā, is Jivātman. Māyā is the sum-total of manifestation, and will totally disappear. Tree-nature is Māyā, it is really God-nature which we see under the veil of Māyā. To ask why Māyā came is a useless question, because the answer can never be given in Māyā; and beyond Māyā, who will ask it? ... Ignorance, reflecting the light of God, is seen; but by itself it is zero. The cloud would not appear except as the sunlight falls on it.'

MĀYĀ AND MITHYĀ

These, as is well known, are the fundamental concepts of the Advaita-Vedānta. These practically mean the same thing. Māyā being the cause, *mithyā* is its effect. Now, what is the nature of Māyā or *mithyā?* According to Advaita-Vedānta, *mithyā* or 'false' is a peculiar something, for, it is neither *sat* or real, nor *asat* or unreal. *Sat* or real is something that is eternally existent and never negated, like Brahman. Again, *asat* or unreal is something that is never even perceived to be true, even for a single moment, like 'sky-flower'. But *mithyā* is something in-between. It is something that is perceived to be true for the time being, but later on negated on the rise of true knowledge regarding the thing in question, like the snake in snake-rope, and the world in world-Brahman illusion. Thus, the snake is perceived to be true at first, but later on negated when the rope is known as such. So the snake is '*mithyā*' or false. So is the world. Thus, '*mithyā*' is said to be '*sadasad-vilakṣaṇa anirvacanīya*', neither real, nor unreal, so indescribable. This is the meaning of phenomenal or empirical existence. So, according to Advaita-Vedānta, the universe of souls and matter is not totally unreal or non-existent, but has no transcendental or absolute existence.

Swamiji also holds the very same view. 'The world has no existence. What is meant by that? It means that it has no absolute existence. It exists only in relation to my mind, to your mind, and to the mind of everyone else. We see this world with the five senses; but if we had another sense, we would see in it something more. If we had yet another sense, it would appear as something still different. It has, therefore, no real existence; it has no unchangeable, immovable, infinite existence. Nor can it be called non-existence seeing that it exists, and we have to work in and through it. It is a mixture of existence and non-existence' (II. 91).

That is, the world is empirically existent, but transcendentally non-existent; so, it is '*mithyā*', or false, in the technical language of Advaita-Vedānta.

MUKTI

In this connection, as elsewhere, Swamiji refers to 'two ideas of God that we find in our scriptures' and the consequent double conception of *mukti*. But that he himself accepts the Advaita-Vedānta doctrine is clear.

'And, what are our relations with this Impersonal Being? That we are He. We and He are one. Everyone is but a manifestation of the Impersonal, the basis of all being; and misery consists in thinking of ourselves as different from this Infinite, Impersonal Being; and liberation consists in knowing our unity with the wonderful Impersonality' (III. 129).

The Advaita-Vedānta admits *jīvan-mukti*, or the possibility of salvation here and now, which the Monotheistic schools do not.

Swamiji, too, admits the same doctrine. 'He is *jīvanmukta* who can live in this world without being attached. He is like the lotus-leaves in water, which are never wetted by the water. He is the highest of human beings, nay, the highest of all beings, for he has realized his identity with the Absolute, he has realized that he is one with Go So long as you think you have the lea difference from God, fear will seize yo but when you have known that you are H all of Him, and the whole of Him, all fe ceases' (III. 11).

SĀDHANĀ

Here, Swamiji seems to have recommend *jñāna-mārga* and *bhakti-mārga*, the path o knowledge and the path of devotion, wi equal vigour, and other *mārgas*, no less. S what is his view in this regard? Let us tu to his answers to questions from a disciple.

'Disciple: Sir, now you are speaking o *jñāna*; sometimes, you proclaim the superi ity of *bhakti*; sometimes of *karma*, and som times of *yoga*. This confuses our unde standing.

'Swamiji: Well, the truth is this. T knowledge of Brahman is the ultimate goal the highest destiny of man. But man can remain absorbed in Brahman all the tim When he comes out of It, he must ha something to engage himself. At that tim he should do such work as will contribute the real well-being of people. ... The pa of *bhakti* or devotion to God, is a slow pr cess, but is easy to practise. ... Only t path of *jñāna* is of quick fruition, and t rationale of all other creeds. But even in t path of discrimination, there is the chance the mind getting struck in the intermina net of vain argumentations. Therefore, alo with it, meditation should be practised. F reasons of discrimination and meditation, t goal, or Brahman, has to be reache (VII. 195-196).

Here, 'meditation' evidently mea '*nididhyāsana*'. Here, too, there are th well-known stages—'*śravana*' or provisio acceptance of a truth on grounds of auth ity: '*manana*' or final acceptance of it o logical grounds through independent reas ing; '*nididhyāsana*' or meditation on t truth accepted, in order to have its fi realization (*upalabdhi*).

SWAMIJI'S VIEW

(a) *In Theory*: *Divinity of Man*

Thus, Swamiji can be safely taken to be a staunch Advaita-Vedāntist in all respects. But to be a mere follower, a mere repeater, a mere imitator, a mere copyist, was totally foreign to his fiery nature. So, he was, no less, an original contributor to the history of Indian thought. In which particular respect? In respect of his celebrated doctrine of 'Practical Vedānta'. The main thing to consider here is the *spirit* or the *emphasis* which makes all the difference. Now, what is the real implication of the Advaita-Vedānta doctrine of '*mithyā*'?

According to the Advaita-Vedānta, as we have seen, the whole problem of world-creation is to be explained on the analogy of an ordinary illusion, like a rope-snake one. Now, what exactly is the status and value of the '*snake*' here? Strictly speaking, it is nothing, a mental something, a false perception, an illusion without any objective validity at all. And, strictly speaking, the universe of souls and matter should also be taken to be so. So, it has to be denied and rejected in any case. And there are two ways of doing so, from two sides, negative and positive: From that of Brahman negatively, and from that of the universe positively. Thus, either, we say negatively, from the side of Brahman, that the universe is nothing, so Brahman is the only Reality; or, we say positively, from the side of the universe, that the universe is Brahman, so Brahman is the only Reality. In this way, the absolute oneness of Brahman may be proved in two ways: Either by *falsifying* the universe, or by *deifying* it. Or the same thing—the absolute phenomenality of the universe, also, may be proved in two ways: Either by saying that it is not what it appears to be, so it is nothing; or by saying that is not what it appears to be, so it is Brahman. That the universe of souls and matter is '*mithyā*', or in Western terminology, a mere '*phenomenon*', is universally admitted. That is, according to all, *it is not what it appears to be*. Then, what is it? Here, one may ignore it and leave it there. Or, one may take it seriously and take it as Brahman.

As a matter of fact, in the history of Advaita-Vedānta, both these kinds of outlook are found, corresponding to theoretical and practical tendencies. Really, most Advaitavādins have a purely theoretical tendency to remain in Brahman entirely, and practically ignore the universe of souls and matter. Of course, as Swamiji himself repeatedly points out, the Vedānta, in all its forms, is intensely practical. For do not the celebrated *mantras*, '*sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ Brahma*' (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, III. 14.1), '*ayamatmā Brahma*' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV. 4.5) 'The world is Brahman', 'The Soul is Brahman' form the very basis of the Vedānta in all its forms? If that be so, from the practical standpoint, it is our bounden duty to look upon all, treat all, serve all as Brahman Himself.

But few Advaitins follow up the theoretical *Ekātmavāda* or doctrine of Oneness, to the practical *Sevāvāda* or ideal of love and service. Perhaps, Māyāvāda and Vivartavāda, the doctrines of Illusion and Delusion, take root in them in such a manner as to make them wholly uninterested in the external world, in their fellow beings. Rather, it is the Monotheistic Vedāntists—who take the world to be neither *māyā* nor *mithyā*, but a manifestation, an actual transformation of God—that joyfully propound the great ideals of *prīti* and *sevā*, love and service. In one sense, this is rather self-contradictory. For, according to the Monistic Vedānta only, every soul is identical with Brahman; while, according to the Monotheistic Vedānta, it is identical with Brahman, yet different from Him. Yet, the ideal of service of living Brahman is not given a central place in the Advaita-Vedānta.

And, herein lies the originality of Swamiji. For it is he, who, with his *guru*, Sri Ramakrishna, for the first time in the history of

Indian philosophy, combined the Monistic Vedāntic theory of oneness of Brahman with the Monotheistic Vedāntic practice of universal love and service.

We say here 'for the first time' purposely, for the ideal of service to humanity is nothing new in India. It has been preached and practised by Vedic seers, Jainas, Buddhists, Monotheistic Vedāntists, and many others. But none before preached the ideal of service of *man as God Himself*. For example, the Jainas and Buddhists propound the service of man as man, the Monotheistic Vedāntists the service of man as a mere manifestation of God, as a servant of God, as different and non-different from God, as *aṇu* or infinitely small—for such is their conception of man.

But it was Swamiji who, for the first time, preached the service of man, not as man, nor even as a mere manifestation of God, but *as God Himself*—not as His servant, not as different from Him, not as *aṇu* or infinitely small, but actually and literally as God Himself, as full God, as undivided God, as *bhūmā* or infinitely great.

In fact, in the whole history of mankind, none has proclaimed the glory and grandeur of man—his absolute divinity, infinite greatness, immeasurable dignity—in such a vehement manner as Swamiji. Nothing infuriated him so much as the common idea of the smallness and sinfulness of man, accepted as fundamental by many theological and philosophical theories of the world. Again and again, with firm faith, unfailing zeal, and ever-new hope, in all his fiery speeches, dialogues, and writings, he urged all to give up for ever this utterly wrong, sinful idea of smallness, sinfulness, separateness; and recognize themselves as what they really are, what they eternally are, what they fully are—viz. Brahman, and and none but Brahman Himself.

Compare, for example, his enthralling address at the Parliament of Religions (19.9. 1893): 'Children of immortal bliss—what a sweet, what a hopeful name! Allow me to call you, brethren, by that sweet name—heirs of immortal bliss! Yea, the Hindus refus to call you sinners! It is a sin to call a ma so. Ye are the children of God, the shares immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Y divinities on earth—sinners! It is a sin t call man so, it is a standing libel on hum nature. Come up, lions and shake off t delusion that you are sheep. You are sou immortal, spirits free, blest, and eternal; y are not matter, ye are not bodies; matter i your servant, not you the servant of matter.'

Again: 'Silly fools tell you that you a sinners, that you sit down in a corner an weep. It is foolishness, wickedness, dow right rascality to say that you are sinners. You are all God. You are the soul of t universe. You are the sun, the moon, and t stars, it is you that are shining everywhere. The whole universe is you. Whom are y going to hate or fight? Know, then, thou a He, and model your whole life according (II.236).

(b) *In Practice*: *Service of Man as Go*

What then is the practical way of achievi this consciousness? It is by reverential serving all as God—nothing less.

'First let us be Gods, and then, help othe to be Gods. Be and make—let this be o motto. Say not, man is a sinner. Tell h that he is God. Even if there were a dev it would be our duty to remember God alwa and not the devil' (IV.297).

'If all be Gods, then, evidently the servi of all is the worship of God.'

'Where should you go to seek for God—a not all the poor, the miserable, the we Gods? Why not worship them first? Wh go to dig a well on the shores of Gange Believe in the omnipotent power of lo (V. 39).

In this way, our service must be whol humble. Ordinarily, we think that we a very kind, very gracious to those whom w help. But, according to Swamiji, the ki ness is on their part, not ours; for, it is th who very kindly allow us to serve them and be blessed.

'All the work you do, is done for your own salvation, is done for your own benefit. Cut out the word "help" from your mind. You cannot help—it is sheer blasphemy! You are here yourself at His pleasure. Do you mean to say you help Him? You worship. When you give a morsel of food to a dog, you worship the dog as God' (V. 172).

Can anything be more sublime?

(c) *Method: Unselfish, yet Loving Work*

Undoubtedly, our work should be absolutely unselfish—only *niṣkāma-karma* should be performed by us. Now, ordinarily, it is thought that such work done for the sake of duty only, is entirely dry, hard work, without any trace of feeling or softness whatsoever. But Swamiji's view is different. According to him, even *niṣkāma-karma* is loving work. For we serve others and worship them out of love, out of reverence, and not out of a dry sense of duty only.

Thus, the originality of Swamiji is that, though an Advaitavādin, he recognizes the absolute necessity of feeling in one's spiritual life.

'It is feeling that is the life, the strength, the vitality, without which no amount of intellectual activity can reach God' (II. 305).

Surely, a strict Advaitin would not admit that. But as surely, knowledge and feeling are by no means opposed; but are rather complementary—like the hard core and the soft petals of a flower, like the hard stalk and soft leaves of a lotus, like the hard crust and the soft kernel of a fruit. But all do not have the vision to see it.

(d) *Sādhanā: Jñāna, yet Bhakti*

The above clearly shows Swamiji's views with regard to it. Finally, *bhakti*, according to him, is love.

'*Bhakti-yoga* is a real, genuine search after the Lord, a search beginning, continuing, and ending in love' (III. 31).

But love is by no means dualistic. Rather, it leads from dualism to non-dualism.

'We all have to begin as dualists in the religion of love. ... But, finally, man himself is transformed in the presence of this light of love, and he realizes at last the beautiful and the inspiring truth that love, the lover, and the Beloved are one' (III. 100).

Thus *jñāna* and *bhakti*, knowledge and love, are by no means opposed to each other, but are rather, two sides of the same thing, leading to the very same realization of oneness. But would a strict Advaitin admit it?

(e) *Swamiji's Standpoint: the vyāvahārika to be elevated to the pāramārthika*

In this connection, as shown above, Swamiji adopts the positive method referred to above. He elevates the '*vyāvahārika*' or the empirical to the '*pāramārthika*' or the transcendental, instead of denying the former. Only one example will suffice.

In an inspiring lecture (delivered in London on 27.10.1896), how beautifully does he bring out the real implications of the Vedānta philosophy of India!

'Here I can lay before you only what the Vedānta seeks to teach, and that is, the *deification* of the world. The Vedānta does not in reality denounce the world. The ideal of renunciation nowhere attains such a height as in the teachings of the Vedānta. But, at the same time, dry suicidal advice is not intended; it really means deification of the world—giving up of the world as we think of it, as we know it, as it appears to us—and to know what it really is. Deify it; it is God alone. ... Thus we have to give up the world, and when the world is given up, what remains? God. What is meant? You can have your wife, but you are to see God in the wife. Give up your children. What does that mean? To turn them out of doors? Certainly not. But see God in your children. So, in everything. In life and in death, in happiness and in misery, the Lord is equally present. The whole world is full of the Lord. Open your eyes and see Him. This is what Vedānta teaches. Give it up: the world we have been thinking of so long, the world to which we have been clinging so long, is a false world of our own creation. Give that up: open your eyes, and see that as such it never existed; it was a dream, *māyā*. What existed was the Lord Himself. It is He who is in the child, in the wife, and in the husband; it is He who is in the good and in the bad; He is in the sin and the sinner; He is in life and in death. A tremendous assertion, indeed! Yet that is the theme the Vedānta wants to demonstrate, to teach, and to preach. This is just the opening theme' (II. 146-47).

And, this may be taken as one of the best commentaries on the Vedānta. It synthesizes in a simple, straight, and sweet manner all the previous ones, bringing out their infinite wealth, inner beauty, and inherent glory. Swamiji had the head of Śaṅkara and the heart of Śrī Caitanya; the eyes of a Monist and the hands of a Monotheist; the tenacity of a scholar and the tenderness of a lover: the devotion of a Theist and the spirit of service of a Humanist. We may call his interpretation of the Vedānta doctrine by a new name, 'Mānavādvaitavāda' or 'Humanistic Monism'. For who has sung '*mānava-mahātmya*' or the glory of man in sweeter tunes than he? 'No books, no scriptures, no science can ever imagine the glory of the Self that appears as man—the most glorious God that ever was, the only God that ever existed, exists, or ever will exist!' (II. 250).

To put the Hindu ideas into English and then make out of dry philosophy and intricate mythology and queer, startling psychology a religion which shall be easy, simple, popular, and at the same time meet the requirements of the highest minds—is a task only those can understand who have attempted it. The abstract Advaita must become living—poetic—in everyday life; out of hopelessly intricate mythology must come concrete moral forms; and out of bewildering *yogi*-ism must come the most scientific and practical psychology —and all this must be put in a form so that a child may grasp it. That is my life's work. The Lord only knows how far I shall succeed. It is hard work, my boy, hard work! ...

Now I will tell you my discovery. All of religion is contained in the Vedānta, that is, in the three stages of the Vedānta philosophy—the Dvaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, and Advaita; one comes after the other. These are the three stages of spiritual growth in man. Each one is necessary. This is the essential of religion: the Vedānta applied to the various ethnic customs and creeds of India is Hinduism. The first stage, i.e. Dvaita, applied to the ideas of the ethnic groups of Europe is Christianity; as applied to the Semitic groups, Mohammedanism. The Advaita as applied in its *yoga*-perception form is Buddhism etc. Now, by religion is meant the Vedānta; the applications must vary according to the different needs, surroundings, and other circumstances of different nations. You will find that, although the philosophy is the same, the Śāktas, Śaivas, etc. apply it each to their own special cult and *forms*.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

A LETTER OF SWAMI RAM TEERTHA*

F. C. College, Lahore
16th November 1897

Jaya Mādhava Rādhāramaṇjī kī Jai

Shri Maharaj Ji,

Pranam. After ten days stay here, Swami Vivekanandaji left (for Dehra Dun) yesterday. Here three lectures were delivered (by him) in English. Swamiji was the guest of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha. He stayed at the Haveli of Raja Dhyan Singh. The first and the last lectures were delivered at the same place. ... Three *sannyāsins*, perhaps from Bengal, and three Englishmen, one of whom was a lady, accompanied him. One of these Englishmen was a reporter who took down his lectures as they were delivered and was sending despatches to the editors of *Brahmavadin* and other papers. This Englishman is most able and is deeply devoted to Swamiji. The other two Europeans are very rich and generally they bore all expenses of Swamiji. Both the first and the second lectures have already been published in *The Tribune*. It is likely that the third lecture may also be published in that paper. The subject of the first lecture was 'Principles Common to All Hindus'. ...

The second lecture was on 'Bhakti'. ... The third lecture was on 'Vedānta'. It lasted for full two and a half hours. The listeners were so deeply engrossed, and it created such an atmosphere, that all idea of time and space was lost. At times, one acquired absolute realization of oneness between oneself and the cosmic Ātman. It struck at the roots of ego and pride in self. In short, it was such a grand success as is seldom seen. Whoever heard this lecture (listeners were in large number), for all of them—whether Englishmen, Christians, or Muslims, or Arya Samajists, or Brahmo Samajists—it proved an eye-opener. The principal and other European professors of the Mission College were also highly benefited.

There were public lectures, no doubt, but Swamiji's knowledge is not reflected so truly in lectures as in his conversations. I listened to his talks with leaders of Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj in private. He answered their questions in such a devastating manner, and presented before them such a picture of their principles, that they returned completely downfaced. And the beauty lies in the fact that he never uttered a single word which could offend their feelings. In a very short time, he got them to admit the baselessness of their own principles. ... Swamiji supported well the Purāṇas, *śrāddha*, and *mūrti-pūjā* in public. Swamiji is a good *paṇḍita* also. He remembers a large number of Śrutis by heart. He has studied Śaṅkara-Bhāṣya, *Śrī-Bhāṣya*, and Mādhva-Bhāṣya on Śārīraka Sūtras. He is going to read the Aṇu-Bhāṣya of Vallabhācāryajī. He has a mastery over Sāṅkhya and Yoga. Of *Bhagavad-Gītā*, he is a great exponent. And he sings most melodiously. ...

(Your) servant
'Ram'

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* Translation of an Urdu letter written to Pandit Din Dayal Vyakhyana Vachaspati.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND INDIAN RENAISSANCE

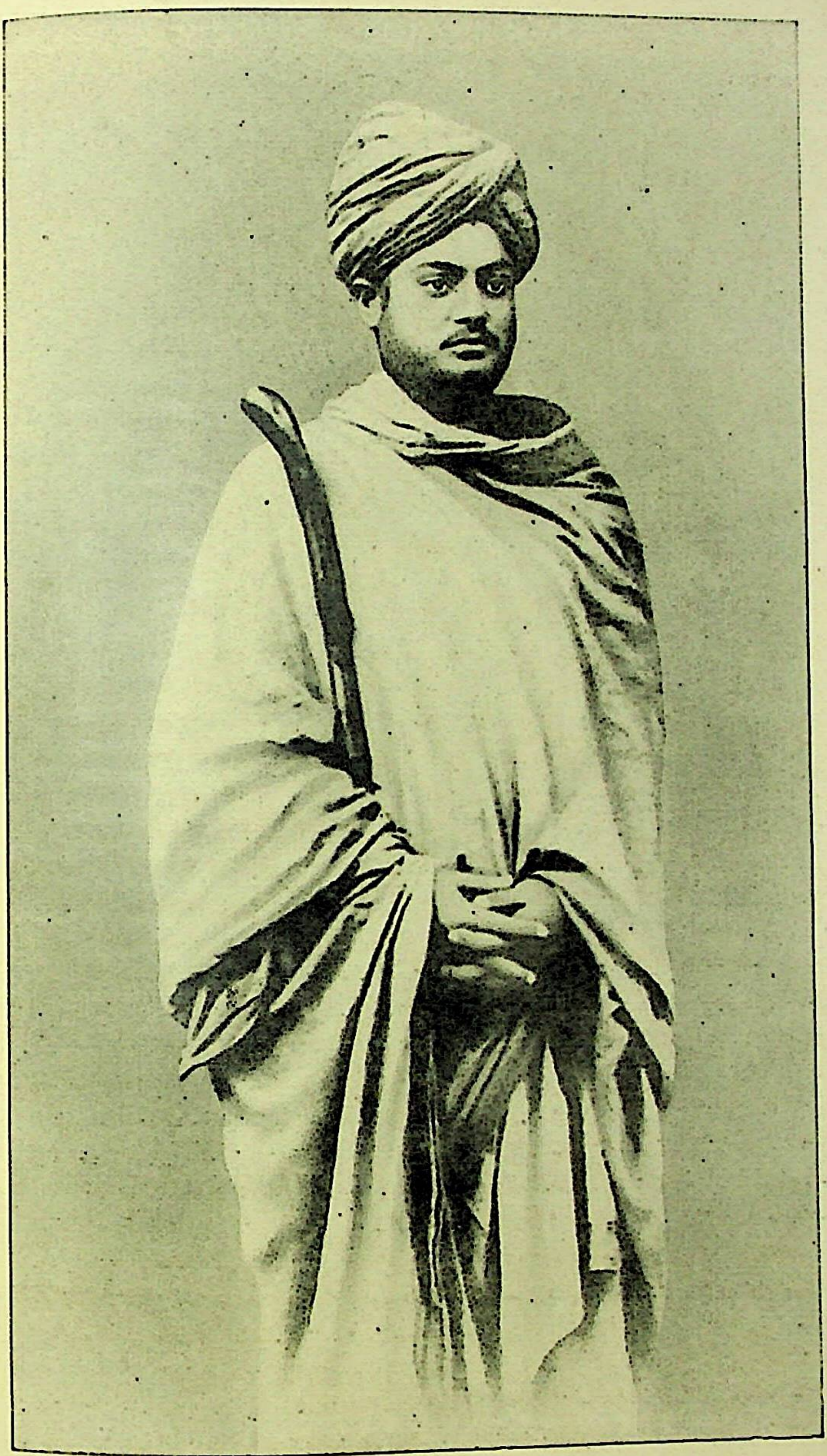
By Swami Tapasyananda

[Swami Tapasyananda is the Head of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Trivandrum, Kerala. In this comprehensive article, he describes the condition in which India was at the time of Swami Vivekananda's advent and tells how his appearance made a vital contribution towards the national revival, which, as we see, is yet in progress and so still needs the inspiration of the Swamiji.]

In pre-independent days, the Indian mind was always accustomed to identify patriotism with political action. There was probably much justification for this identification at that time, as the struggle against British imperialism was considered to be the main patriotic duty of all Indians. The lingering memory of that tradition seems to be unconsciously persisting in the nation's mind even today, although the circumstances that justified this identification have passed. This apotheosis of politics has resulted, as its corollary, in an unconscious, and unhealthy, tendency to forget the need of the vitalizing influence of the patriotic sentiment in other fields of life. In fact, many of the national problems that face us today can be solved only when the nation recognizes that the leavening and stimulating influence of patriotism is no less needed in the educational, scientific, industrial, administrative, religious, and other fields of life than in the political field.

The special importance of Swami Vivekananda to the national life of India today lies in the fact that, in him, we find an ideal of patriotism of the highest order without any connection with political action or with political organizations. In fact, he lived at a time when political unrest and agitation had not started in this country. The national life of India was then dominated by a sense of dismay and inferiority arising from military defeat and political subjection by Western powers. Indians of that generation were therefore doubtful of the essential soundness of the very foundations of their ancient culture; for, if these were sound, why should the structure of empires and social organizations based on them crumble to pieces so easily before the might of the young nations from far off West? This questioning led to a displacement of national pride and self-confidence by a base spirit of imitation of the West and an uncritical admiration for all that came from that quarter. From military and political suppression India was rapidly heading towards utter spiritual defeat and death. Swami Vivekananda was the mighty spirit that cried halt to this process of decline and degeneration, and by restoring self-confidence and generating a fresh hope and faith, started the country on a new career of resurgence that gradually culminated in the national movement and the attainment of political independence.

How did he achieve this? If we study his life, we find that the secret of his greatness lies in his uncompromising championship of the spiritual ideal of India and his fervent patriotism centering round this ideal. He was not a political leader with any party backing, but only a *parivrājaka*, a Hindu *sannyāsin* and ascetic. He was, no doubt, educated in a modern university and had imbibed deeply the scientific and critical spirit of the West. But his secular education was supplemented by his discipleship under his divine teacher, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, who embodied in himself the whole of Indian spiritual tradition. Discipleship under him consisted in practising the spiritual disciplines developed by the sages of India for overcoming the barriers of the body and the mind, and attaining intuitive experience of the universal Spirit, which is the origin and



(Hyderabad, 1893)

'The sky thy roof, the grass thy bed ; and food,
What chance may bring, well cooked or ill, judge not. ...
Like rolling river free thou ever be, Sannyasin bold ! Say
"Om Tat Sat, Om !"'

(Trivandrum, December 1892)

'Strike off thy fetters ! Bonds that bind thee down,
Of shining gold, or darker, baser ore ; ...
For fetters, though of gold, are not less strong to bind ;
Then off with them, Sannyasin bold ! Say
"Om Tat Sat, Om !" '

support of everything. The culture of India holds the development of this intuitive experience as the ultimate purpose of life and considers all other values as only subservient to it. As against the criticisms of Indian culture for all its failings at the social and political level that the Westernized intelligentsia of the time were making, the life of Ramakrishna stood as a silent but powerful rejoinder and as a vindication of the essential truth and soundness of the basic values of Indian culture mentioned above. Before he met his great Master, Swami Vivekananda, too, had in his early youth imbibed the Westernized outlook of the intelligentsia and developed into a powerful critic of Indian society and ways of life. But symbolic, as it were, of the future turn of thought, the impact of Ramakrishna on the mind of Vivekananda, the young talented representative of modern India, produced a complete revolution in the cultural outlook of the latter. Vivekananda realized that, in India's ideals of devotion, renunciation, knowledge, and realization, one found the high watermark of human culture and that these formed the only secure foundation of an enduring civilization. He recognized that, in so far as India still remained true to them and could produce men of the calibre of Ramakrishna even in the midst of her political and economic downfall, her soul must be intact and full of vigour and vitality, and that, so long as she remained spiritually undefeated, her revival and readjustment to the conditions of the modern scientific age were only a question of time and wise leadership. As a confirmation, as it were, of the lesson he learnt at the feet of his Master, came to him the intimate experience of the physical and mental life of India at all its social levels—from the peasants in the fields to the Maharajas in the palaces, from the wild tribes in hills to the sophisticated minds of Westernized Indian cities—during a decade of wandering from the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari as a *parivrājaka*. These experiences of the spiritual India in the Master, in the people, and in the intuition of his own soul, filled him with a passionate love for the land and its culture, with a conviction of its undying vitality and its important role in shaping the future of mankind.

It was thus, with his spirit expanded, intensified, and inspired by a burning faith in the past and future of India, with a Messianic fervour radiating from his transfigured personality, that Swami Vivekananda, the unknown monk, burst all of a sudden on the world platform when he appeared at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893.

The past generation of Indians, as also those of us who could recreate the history of those days in our minds, could feel the thrill of patriotic pride when this young Indian, standing unambiguously and uncompromisingly for the Indian outlook on life, received the ovation of the powerful and prosperous West at the very start of his memorable speech at the Parliament of Religions, wherein he addressed the audience as 'Sisters and Brothers of America'. The triumph of the Swami at the Parliament of Religions and, in his subsequent life, as an interpreter of Indian thought to the West, was a landmark in the cultural history of this land. It demonstrated to the Indian of those times that the 4000 years of his national history was not a movement in the false direction, that his culture and institutions were not the lifeless fossils that they were interpreted to be by his foreign conquerors, and that, if these were expressed in life and properly expounded as the Swami did, they were vital enough to initiate a new renaissance in human society. Thus the Swami restored to India the faith that she had lost in herself and her destiny. From being a mere suppliant at the door of the great nations, he awakened her to a consciousness of her essential role in world history as the spiritual teacher of mankind. The sense of a national destiny and confidence in the power of a people and their tradition are the essential requisites of a national revival, and in so far as Swami Vivekananda's appearance made a vital contribution in this direction, it was as important an event in the development of Indian nationalism as the Dandi March, the Quit India Campaign, and the achievement of Indian Independence.

The rest of his life was spent in interpreting the spiritual ideals of India in the context of modern life, and in inspiring his countrymen with that love of India of which he himself was an embodiment. From one end of the country to the other he travelled exhorting the people of India to a new gospel in which the traditional spiritual values of the land mingled with an intense patriotic spirit. 'For the next fifty years', he declared, 'this alone shall be our keynote—this, our great Motherland, India. Let all other vain gods disappear for that time from our minds. This is the only God that is awake, our own race, everywhere His hands, everywhere His feet, everywhere His ears, He covers everything. ... What vain gods shall we go after and yet cannot worship the God that we see all around us, the Virāṭ? When we have worshipped this, we shall be able to worship all other gods. ... What is needed is *citta-śuddhi*, purification of the heart; and how does that come? Through worship. And the first of all worship is the worship of the Virāṭ—of all these around us.' Thus did he link worship, the central ideal of all religions, with his patriotic gospel.

The nationalism he preached was not, however, of the chauvinistic type which declares, 'My country right or wrong', but one which aims at the good of all through India's good. His study of world history had convinced him that each nation or culture had one theme, one central note, round which its life was organized and which formed its special contribution to the sum total of human culture and achievement. When any nation transgressed from its national ideal and ceased to fulfil any special purpose in the life of the world as a whole, it perished in course of time, and nature eliminated it from the face of the earth. That was what had happened to all the ancient nations of the world except India where society has more than 4000 years of continuous history. And India has been an exception to this rule only because she has still the vitality to play her part in world history, that being the contribution of spiritual insight and guidance to mankind. According to him, the special genius of the Indian people lies in their aptitude to actualize the truth of God and Ātman and to order the physical life on the basis of this realization. All epochs of national revival and cultural expansion in India have been preceded or accompanied by the appearance of great spiritual personalities and a general rise in the standard of the spiritual life of the people, and the material developments were only the off-shoots of it. The Swami, therefore, emphasized always that, if India is really to rise to a high status among the nations of the world, it will not be sufficient for her to imitate and re-echo the political and economic idealogies of the English, the Americans, or the Russians. While we have to learn the material sciences and the principles of technology and organization from the nations of the West, we must continue to have a firm hold on the spiritual ideals inculcated in the *Gītā* and the Upaniṣads. The teachings contained in these great spiritual texts are the universal principles relating to the inner growth of man, and are thus to be distinguished from dogmatic theologies and creedal religions of organized churches and traditions. There is nothing incompatible in them with the teachings of science and with the modern ways of social and industrial organization. To lose sight of these spiritual values in the pursuit of wealth and material glories and to live in complete disregard of the spiritual foundations of life will be the denial of India's past and the stepping stone to her destruction as a cultural entity.

The Swami's defence of India's past should not, however, be interpreted to mean that he had any sympathy for that mentality, how-of false pride, which indulges in boastful and sentimental claims of bygone glories as a compensation for present downfall and degradation. Thinking on the past is beneficial only as a spring-board for the future, never as an opiate for deadening higher aspirations and efforts. He recognized that man in the West has effected a revolution in life through the discoveries of science and its application to human well-being. In the attainment of power, in the creation of wealth, and in the amelioration of suffering, the contributions of modern science have to be reckoned as unparalleled. It is also science and its application to production and communication that have made the modern industrial civilization possible, giving a chance to the common man to assert his manhood and be something more than hewers of wood and drawers of water. These achievements of the modern spirit were given full recognition by Swami Vivekananda, and he wanted India of his times, just emerging from pre-scientific and medieval conditions of life, to participate fully in the achievements and aspirations of the new age. He even envisaged the idea of a monastic order devoted entirely to scientific research; he dreamed of a time when machines would take up all work involving tiring drudgery and leave man sufficient leisure for higher pursuits. So great was his faith in science and its possibilities. But he knew also the limitations of science—that it puts only power into the hands of man and not wisdom, that it imparts knowledge of nature, but not love for one's fellow beings, that it enlightens us on the mechanism of nature, but gives no insight into its mystery. He felt that spiritual insight alone could ennoble and expand the heart of man. It is only in the encounter with God that the noblest part in him is enkindled. Without this consciousness of the divine spark in him, the power which science has armed him with will only make him an exalted animal with unlimited powers of destruction. It was the conviction of Swami Vivekananda that the ancient heritage of India could alone supplement the world civilization with what it is lacking in the spiritual field, and it was for this reason that he reminded Indians of that heritage of which they were the custodians. In his eyes, therefore, Indians would be but throwing away the baby with the bath, if they abandoned that part of the heritage, too, in an indiscriminate flair for modernity and in a rapid process of readjustment to the new situation brought about by the industrial age.

It was not only in the matter of pursuing science and applying it to life that the Swami was modern, but also in his sympathy for the social aspirations of the new age. He never exhorted his countrymen to go back to the Vedic times, but asked them to march in the vanguard of progress. Today, Indian leaders are speaking of the socialistic pattern of society. Swami Vivekananda spoke of it as the ideal for his country more than sixty years back. He declared he was a socialist, not because socialism was perfect, but because all other forms of social organizations had been tried and found miserably wanting, and it was therefore worthwhile trying the new social ideal. He felt that the weakness of India lay not in its want of talents, but in the terrible backwardness of its masses, and that, unless they were educated, enriched, and made self-conscious, the Indian nation cannot rise.

The Swami declared that his mission in life was to endeavour to restore what he called 'manhood' to the people of India. By this he meant that neither by mere indulgence in thoughts over past glories, nor by base imitation of the West and uncritical acceptance of all that came from that quarter, neither by a mere gospel of asceticism exalting poverty, nor by exclusive pursuit of material prosperity and an increasing standard of life, can the national life of India be resuscitated. India must grow strong, and real strength will come only when India becomes spiritually self-conscious while simultaneously improving her material condition by the application of science and modern technology.

EDUCATIONAL IDEALS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

By Dr. B. Kuppuswamy

[Dr. B. Kuppuswamy, M.A., Ph.D., is the Joint Director of the India International Centre, New Delhi. In this article, he analyses and discusses the thinking of Swami Vivekananda in regard to the problems of education in India as he saw them in the last decade of the nineteenth century.]

While it is true that the great Swami Vivekananda never set out to write an elaborate discourse on education, the publication of Shri T. S. Avinashilingam has clearly shown that he was greatly concerned about education and spoke and wrote about it on many occasions. The compilation clearly shows the depth of insight, the vividness of feelings, and the vastness of the vision of Swamiji regarding education, its ideals, and their implementation. Most of the sentences compiled read as if they are aphorisms. An attempt is made in this paper to analyse and discuss the thinking of Swamiji with respect to the problems of education in India as he saw them in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

AIMS OF EDUCATION

'The end of all education, all training, should be man-making. The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow' (7).* Thus Vivekananda conceived of education neither as an ornament nor as an accomplishment but, essentially, as a means to make a man grow to his full stature to stimulate him to develop the best in him. According to him, 'Liberty is the first condition of growth' (5). He was convinced that individual as well as national growth depends upon *śraddhā*. In his own words: 'The idea of true *śraddhā* must be brought back once more to us. The faith in our own selves must be reawakened, and then only, all the problems which face our country will gradually be solved by ourselves. What we want is this *śraddhā*' (13). Thus the aim of parents as well as the teacher should be to make the child and the student develop faith in himself, in his abilities, aptitudes, and talent.

'To preach the doctrine of *śraddhā* or genuine faith is the mission of my life. Let me repeat to you that this faith is one of the most potent of factors of humanity. First have faith in yourselves. Know that, though one may be a little bubble and another may be a mountain-high wave, yet behind both the bubble and the wave there is the infinite ocean' (14). We see here the reason for his personal success as a teacher of Vedānta as well as of national resurgence. It is because of this that he realized the value of encouragement, which is the most important thing in the parent-child relationship, teacher-student relationship, superior-subordinate relationship, and so on. He wrote: 'We should give positive ideas. Negative thoughts only weaken men. Do you not find that where parents are constantly taxing their sons to read and write, telling them that they will never learn anything, and calling them fools and so forth, the latter do actually turn out to be so in many cases? If you speak kind words to them and encourage them, they are bound to improve in time. If you can give them positive ideas, people will grow up to be men and learn to stand on their own legs' (4-5).

Another important aspect of education according to the Swami is its function in character formation: 'We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one's own feet.' Consequently, he condemned the equation of 'education' with 'information'. He wrote: 'Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making, assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library. If education were identical with information, the libraries would be the greatest sages in the world and encyclopaedias the *ṛṣis*' (6).

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* The numbers within brackets refer to the pages of *Education*, by Swami Vivekananda, compiled and edited by T. S. Avinashilingam, Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, Coimbatore, 1958 (fifth edition).

Thus we find that Swami Vivekananda's voice is even today authentic. We find that his statement on the aims of education and his condemnation of the practices of education of those times are valid even after sixty-five years.

EDUCATION AS MANIFESTATION VERSUS EDUCATION AS GROWTH

One of the most often quoted statements by Swamiji asserts: 'Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. ... Knowledge is inherent in man. No knowledge comes from outside; it is all inside' (1). This position was developed by him probably for two reasons: there is, first of all, the philosophical reason based on the Advaita position of the concept of *āvaraṇa;* secondly, he writes: 'A child educates itself, the teacher spoils everything by thinking that he is teaching' (4). He draws the analogy of teaching a child and the growth of a plant. Just as a plant develops by itself, the child also teaches itself. The function of the parent and the teacher is limited to the removal of obstacles, like an horticulturist who loosens the soil, so that the seed can sprout easily and puts the hedge around it, so that no harm comes to it from outside. It is not necessary in this paper to discuss the validity of the philosophical doctrine. We can only point out that this idea that knowledge is all inside is not supported by Swamiji himself in other places. Elsewhere, he writes: 'Teaching must be modified according to the needs of the taught' (5). This statement has the clear recognition of the individual differences among the children and the necessity on the part of the teacher to recognize these individual differences and plan his lessons in such a way that he is able to do his best for person or the group in his charge. Further, the Swami also writes, as we have noticed above: 'We should give positive ideas. Negative thoughts only weaken the man' (4). Here also, there is a clear recognition of the influence of the parents and the teacher on the growth of the individual. He recognizes that 'people will grow up to be men and learn to stand on their own legs, if they are given positive ideas' (5). Thus it looks as if Swamiji is contradicting himself. But from another point of view, it may be shown that there is really no contradiction. Achievement is dependent both on the abilities of the individual and the environmental opportunities he has. The existence of mere opportunities without ability will be useless. The rich man or the highly educated man whose child is feeble-minded feels terrible frustration. All his attempts to provide the best teachers and the best educational equipment lead the child nowhere, because the child has a low grade ability. On the other hand, millions of children in the rural areas and among the lower castes in India must have had very high grade ability, according to the expectations based on the normal probability curve. But they have not been able to grow up and realize their potentiality. So, from this point of view, we can see that Swamiji is trying to put the two ideas separately and this creates the impression that he is contradicting himself. This is due to the fact that Swamiji spoke and wrote occasionally in different circumstances so far as education was concerned; his field was philosophy and religion. It is for us to remove the apparent inconsistencies by putting together the ideas which he put forth on different occasions, each valid in itself.

CONCENTRATION AS THE ESSENCE OF EDUCATION

Being a *yogin,* he has been able to show that 'from the lowest man to the highest *yogin,* all have to use the same method to attain knowledge'. 'There is only one method by which to attain knowledge, that which is called concentration. The very essence of education is concentration of mind' (9). He has tried to show that every human being engaged in any kind of occupation functions better if he concentrates. The parents at home and the teacher in the school, without their knowing, continually give training in concentration to the children. But as Swamiji has pointed out, ninety per cent of the energy of an ordinary human being is wasted through lack of concentration. He shows that the difference between the animal and the human being is the difference in the ability to concentrate. While a dog or the monkey responds to the diverse stimuli that impinge on it, the human being is able to disregard the irrelevant ones. Consequently, he is more efficient. The difference in achievement among the various human beings can also be explained on the basis of the difference in the ability to concentrate. Many human beings with high education, implying by this that they have high ability, however, end up with very poor achievement in life. Among the various causes responsible for this poor performance, undoubtedly, lack of concentration and inability to continually apply one's mind on a certain task is one of the important reasons. The work of a teacher is to help the child develop interest in the task undertaken so that he can do it with concentration. One of the important things about the human being is that achievement is very closely connected with the formation of habits. With high ability, but without proper habits of work, the level of achievement of an individual will be very low.

In a very realistic manner Swamiji writes: 'As soon as I try to call on my thoughts and concentrate my mind upon any one object of knowledge, thousands of undesired impulses rush into the brain, thousands of thoughts rush into the mind and disturb it. How to check it and bring the mind under control is the whole subject of study in *rāja-yoga.* The practice of meditation leads to mental concentration' (11). That is why he even goes to the extent of asserting that 'the very essence of education is the concentration of mind, not the collection of facts' (11). What he means is that education should help us to develop concentration, and once we develop the ability to concentrate, we can use this to study any problem, gather the necessary data, and come to the right conclusions.

In passing, we may refer to the very interesting observation which Swamiji makes regarding the difference between the ancient Greeks and the ancient Hindus: 'The Greeks applied their concentration to the external world and the result was perfection in art, literature, etc. The Hindu concentrated on the internal world, upon the unseen realms in the self, and developed the science of Yoga' (11). Even today, we find that there is this difference between the modern Western approach to life and the modern Indian approach to life.

CHARACTER IS AGGREGATE OF TENDENCIES

According to Swamiji, every experience leaves behind its impression (*vāsanā* or *saṁskāra*). He asserts that our tendencies for action as well as thought are based upon the results of our actions, depending upon the way they have led to pleasure or pain. 'The character of any man is but the aggregate of his tendencies, the sum total of the bent of his mind' (15). 'Every work that we do, every movement of the body, every thought that we think, leaves such an impression on the mind-stuff, and even when such impressions are not obvious on the surface, they are sufficiently strong to work beneath the surface, subconsciously. What we are every moment is determined by the sum total of these impressions on the mind. Each man's character is determined by the sum total of these impressions' (16). The Swami tries to show the difference between the effects of good impressions and bad impressions. While the effects of good impressions are helpful, the effects of bad impressions are disastrous. As he puts it: 'If a man continuously hears bad words, thinks bad thoughts, does bad actions, his mind will be full of bad impressions; and they will influence his thought and work without his being conscious of the fact. In fact, these bad impressions in him will be always working. The sum total of these impressions in him will create the strong motive power for doing bad actions. He will be like a machine in the hands of his impressions' (16-17). Is this position psychologically sound? Are there differences between good impressions and bad impressions? Secondly, if there are such differences, how do they arise? To put it briefly, good acts are acts which are in conformity with the norms of the group in which an individual is brought up. Conformity of behaviour is what is expected. The behaviour that goes against the social norms leads to conflict within the individual and conflict between the individual and the group. Swamiji clearly shows that the individual who is continually suffering from internal and external conflict will be like a machine mechanically doing acts losing his ability to control himself, to direct his actions.

His observations regarding the individual with bad habits are very interesting and very valid. 'The only remedy for bad habits is counter habits' (18). Thus he fully recognizes that good actions as well as bad actions are merely the results of habit formation. The parent or the teacher who is confronted by mean behaviour of the child must look at it from a very detached point of view and try to study how the bad habit was formed, instead of becoming angry with the child or looking upon the child as a monster, or his behaviour, as a result of fate. As the Swami says: 'Character is repeated habits and repeated habits alone can reform character' (18).

QUALITIES OF THE TEACHER AND THE TAUGHT

Swami Vivekananda, in the course of his speeches and writings, has described very vividly the conditions that are necessary for success as a pupil and as a teacher.

The pupil must have purity—what is called the *trikaraṇaśuddhi*, purity in thought, speech, and action. This is the ancient tradition in India which requires the pupil to be a *brahmacārin*. Secondly, he must have the real thirst for knowledge; in other words, he must feel the need to know. Unless this felt need is there, all the other conditions of the curriculum, school building, the qualifications of the teacher—all these will be of no avail. Thirdly, there should be perseverance. This is a very important pre-condition for success in education. Unless the child or young man persists in the way in which a little child of one or two years of age persists by repeating in order to master the new word or the new movement, there cannot be any achievement. All these conditions imply that there should be self-control and self-restraint. He writes: 'All outgoing energy following a selfish motive is frittered away; it will not cause power to return to you; but if restrained, it will result in development of power' (33). This depends upon the control of the internal and external senses.

As regards the qualifications of the teacher, it is probably to be assumed that, since a teacher is always a student, he must have all the characteristics of the student described above. Besides these, the Swami speaks of three other conditions: The teacher should not merely have information about a particular field; he must also be alive to the significance of his field of knowledge. To quote Swamiji: 'The teacher who deals too much in words loses the spirit' (31-32). Secondly, the teacher has to influence the pupil. According to Swamiji, the function of the teacher is neither communication of information nor mere stimulation of the intellect; it is a matter of influencing the pupil so that he is transformed. As we have seen already, the chief aim of education is one of development of the personality. Here Swamiji makes a very significant contribution. According to him, we influence others and we are influenced by others. This interchange is something which goes on incessantly, and this is something which is the most important thing in the school, particularly in the teacher-pupil relationship. As he writes: 'Words, even thoughts, contribute only one-third of the influence in making an impression, the man, two-thirds' (21).

He shows how the great leaders of mankind are unique, not with respect to what they thought and taught, but in the way in which they have influenced the people during the times they lived and long after. Every teacher must bear this fact constantly in the background of his mind. It is only then that he can be a successful teacher and fulfil his purpose as a teacher.

Finally, according to Swamiji, the teacher must have pure motive. 'The teacher must not teach with any ulterior selfish motive, for money, name, or fame. His work must be simply out of love, out of pure love for mankind at large' (32). In other words, no man can be a successful teacher unless there is an element of love on the one hand, and renunciation on the other. It is well to bear in mind that this love should not be towards a particular individual. The teacher with partiality in affection ends up in provoking jealousy and ill feelings. The teacher must develop an art of loving all his pupils with impartiality. This is rather a difficult thing to develop, to love and yet to be impartial.

MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION AND KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGES

Swamiji was interested in the secular as well as religious education in India. He wrote: 'Therefore, the ideas must be taught in the language of the people' (70). He realized that mass education must be through the medium of the regional languages. It is a familiar fact that the Ramakrishna Mission, in the last half a century, has produced religious literature in the various languages of the country. However, the Swami was equally clear in his mind that Sanskrit education should not be neglected. In fact, he asserted: 'Even the great Buddha made one false step when he stopped the Sanskrit language from being studied by the masses. ... He spoke the language of the people and the people understood him. It spread ideas quickly and made them reach far and wide' (70). Unless Sanskrit education is available to the masses, it will lead to all the consequences of caste system and confine the *elite* to a few families. He was equally insistent that English language and Western sciences should be taught. Thus, while he was eager that mass education should be promoted through the language of the people, he was also eager that the people at large should have opportunities to learn the classical language—Sanskrit, and the modern language—English.

EDUCATION AND NATIONAL PROGRESS

He was greatly interested in the common man of India. He realized very clearly that the country where only a few people are educated cannot prosper. He also realized that education should build up character and induce faith in oneself and help him to become an efficient citizen. He wrote: 'The education that does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion—is it worth the name?' (7). He condemned the Indian tradition which is prescriptive. He wrote: 'In India, it was the king who used to prescribe everything, from Kulinism down to what one can eat and what one should not. In Western countries, the people do everything themselves' (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda.* Vol. IV, p. 414). He was convinced that the rapid advancement of the West was due to freedom of the people to determine for themselves what is good for them. He particularly stressed the Western method, i.e. 'first of all, discussion about the wished-for end, then the carrying it out by the combination of all the forces' (*ibid.*). He contrasted the ancient civilization of India, Egypt, and Rome with the modern Western civilization and showed that the significant difference between the two consists in the gradual spread of education from patricians to plebeians. He wrote: 'I see it before my eyes, a nation is advanced in proportion as education and intelligence spread among the masses. The chief cause of India's ruin has been the monopolizing of the whole education and intelligence of the land, by dint of pride and royal authority, among a handful of men' (*ibid.*, p. 415). He was convinced that the country can progress only by spreading education among the masses. He was also convinced that the country, for its progress, needed technical education, too. He wrote: 'We need technical education and all else that will develop industries, so that men, instead of seeking for service, may earn enough to provide for themselves and save against the rainy day' (7).

Thus we find that Swami Vivekananda was eager to promote the growth of the Indian nation through mass education, using the language of the people, and through technical education, for the development of agriculture as well as industries. Thus he was very clear in his mind about the dual purpose of education—it should promote the growth of the individual and contribute towards national progress. His vision about the purposes as well as the means of education was very clear. However, it must be regretted that the people at large, even the educationists, are not yet aware of the contribution of this great man towards the theory and practice of education at a time when the country was, as it were, at the threshold of resurgence, in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Whenever Swamiji used the word 'I', he was identified with Brahman, and was referring to the universal Self.

At the Baranagore monastery (when Sri Ramakrishna's *sannyāsin* disciples were still young boys), Swami Abhedananda used to avoid all types of work. He would shut himself in a room and engage himself in study and meditation. He used to say that he did not wish to work. Sometimes he would observe complete silence and not talk for days on end. Some of us used to be angry with him for that. But Swamiji said: 'You people are jealous! You can't bear that somebody is doing something to improve himself. He is not lazily idling his time away. What if he doesn't work? Never mind, you don't have to work either. I'll do everything. Bring all the vessels that are in the monastery, I'll scour them for you.'

The very utterance of the word 'I' would take Swamiji beyond body, mind, and senses. This was his normal state of consciousness. What we have seen in Swamiji! During his last illness, when he was hardly able to breathe, he would still roar: 'Arise! Awake!'

Swami Turiyananda

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: THE EXPONENT OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Swami Smarananananda

[Swami Smarananananda, a member of the Ramakrishna Order, is connected with *Prabuddha Bharata.* In this interesting article, he tries to clarify the oft-expressed doubt whether Swami Vivekananda was a true exponent of Sri Ramakrishna or whether he preached contrary to the teachings of his great Master.]

It was the year 1881. A strange drama was being enacted on the bank of the Gaṅgā at Dakshineshwar, four miles north of Calcutta. The Gaṅgā, after her winding journey through hills and dales, was nearing her destination—the sea; but this did not deter her from retracing her steps during high tide, as it were, in order to witness this strange drama. In the Kālī temple of Dakshineshwar, a middle-aged man, frail but wiry in physique, with bloodshot eyes, calling often 'Mother, Mother', was the centre of attraction. He was eagerly awaiting the arrival of someone very dear to him. At last, he arrived. And what joy! This dear one was a young man of 18, tall and handsome, and of an athletic build. The old man was mad in the remembrance of God and asserted that he saw Him face to face; the young man heard incredulously, then half believingly, and began to think that the former, though a lovable man, may be mad. Thus began the historic meeting between the two prophets of modern India, who came to her rescue in the hour of her peril—the Master and the disciple—Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

Today, when many decades have rolled by since their exit from the arena of this world, we cannot hear the name of the one without remembering the other. Yet, at the time of their first meeting, what a contrast did they present! Whoever could have thought that Narendra, the brilliant graduate of Calcutta University and a man of penetrating intellect, was to be the chief disciple of the 'mad' Paramahamsa—unlettered and merged in the thought of God? But that was to be. And, even their life stories present a striking contrast. There are some who even think that Swami Vivekananda, in his life and work, did not represent his Master's ideas, but his own. Romain Rolland, who wrote the deep and moving biographies of both, begins that of Swami Vivekananda thus: 'The great disciple whose task it was to take up the spiritual heritage of Ramakrishna and disseminate the grain of his thought throughout the world was both physically and morally his direct antithesis.'

Was Swami Vivekananda, in truth, the antithesis of Sri Ramakrishna? In this article we shall discuss this question and show that though apparently Swamiji's teachings are at variance with those of his Master, actually he represented his *guru* in every way and faithfully carried out the task assigned to him.

More than anything else, the very fact that the Master had all along trained Narendra to be his torch bearer and the leader of the future Order to be founded in his name, makes it patent that he was to represent Sri Ramakrishna in his actions and preach his message to the world at large. Then, if we are to accept the opinions of some people, are we to understand that Swamiji did not carry out his Master's behest? Really, that cannot be imagined even. Then, how are we to explain the variations found in the lives of these two personalities? It will not be difficult, at all, if we understand the work of Swamiji as the culmination of that started by the Master. And this was actually so is clear from the words of Swamiji himself: 'All the ideas that I preach are only an attempt to echo his (Sri Ramakrishna's) ideas. ... Every word that

I have ever uttered which is true and good, is simply an attempt to echo his voice.' Swamiji reiterated again and again, at various places, that his only task was to work out his Master's ideas: 'I am what I am, and what I am is always due to him, whatever in me or in my words is good and true and eternal came to me from his mouth, his heart, his soul. ... If I can show the world one glimpse of my Master, I shall not live in vain.' Again, in a letter addressed to Swami Shivananda, his brother disciple, in 1894, he writes: 'My supreme good fortune is that I am his servant through life after life. A single word of his is to me far weightier than the Vedas and the Vedānta. Oh! I am the servant of the servant of his servants.'

From all these, it is obvious that Swami Vivekananda's sole aim in life was to complete the task his Master had started. In fact, he had no option about it, for he declared often that Sri Ramakrishna had made him a slave, and though he would like to merge into the bliss of *nirvāṇa*, his Master would goad him on to work. Even the vision of Sri Ramakrishna, where he saw a divine child (i.e. himself) persuading a *ṛṣi* to accompany him to earth for helping him in his work, is indicative of the divine purpose of the advent of these two spiritual personalities on the Indian scene. Sri Ramakrishna repeatedly declared that Narendra had work to do in the world and reprimanded him when he wanted to merge into *nirvikalpa samādhi*. He declared to others about Narendra: 'The time will come when he will shake the world to its very foundations through the strength of his intellectual and spiritual powers. I have prayed that the Divine Mother may keep his realization of the Absolute veiled from Naren. There is much work to be done by him.' Such declarations of the Master show that he was fully aware of the nature of the work Swami Vivekananda would have to do in the world, and that he had fully instructed him about it.

Sri Ramakrishna's mission on earth—so far as our human understanding goes and as his disciples have, time and again, declared—was to demonstrate that all religions lead to the same goal and that, through right practice, this goal is realizable. God is as true as any perceived thing, nay, He is much more true than the material things. He carried out this task by practising numerous *sādhanās* not only according to various spiritual paths within the fold of Hinduism, but also through the religious practices of Christianity and Islam. And, for this purpose, he was not in need of any academic education or even Śāstraic training. For he vindicated the truths spoken of in the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, and other scriptures through personal experience. He even declared that his spiritual experiences had transcended the Vedas and the Vedāntas. Having acquired such spiritual riches, he felt the need of interpreting his experiences to the world at large. No doubt, when the flower blooms, the bees gather round it of their own accord. But one has to remember that the bees alone make honey, and not others. The disciples who came to him may be compared to these bees. But how can the greatness of the flower be made known to others? This can be done only through the honey collected by these bees. It was this aspect of Sri Ramakrishna's mission in this world that was assigned by him to his *sannyāsin* disciples, the chief among them being Swami Vivekananda.

As Sri Ramakrishna used to say, his body was predominated by the *sattva* element and activity was not for him. He was in need of one, a virile young man, with infinite capacity for activity; one who would have been educated in the modern way and would possess a sharp intellect and the ability to interpret the Master's message to the world in the light of modern science and rationalism and show that such a universal religion as preached by Sri Ramakrishna existed; over and above these, he was to be a person of the strongest moral calibre and capable of the highest spiritual realization. This messenger, this St. Paul, Sri Ramakrishna found in his 'dear Narendra', who, to describe in his own words, was a 'thousand-petalled lotus' and 'one who had all the sixteen parts, as against Keshab Chandra's one part'.

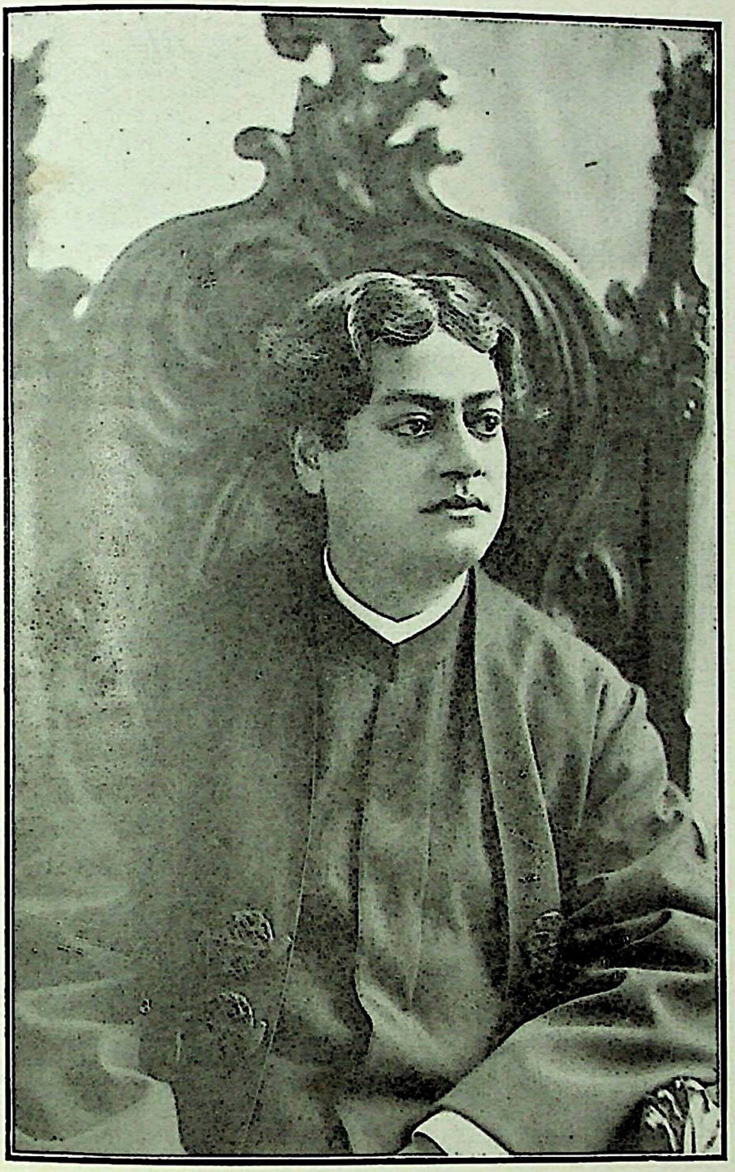
That this work was assigned to Swami Vivekananda by his Master is clearly stated by the Swami himself. After stating why he preached only the Upaniṣads, he poses the question: 'What is the place of Sri Ramakrishna in this scheme?' And he answers: 'He is the method, that wonderful unconscious method! He did not understand himself. He knew nothing of England, or the English, save that they were queer folk from over the sea. But he lived that great life, and I read the meaning.' Elsewhere, during his days of itineracy, he declared: 'I have a great mission to fulfil and I am in despair at the smallness of my capacity. I have an injunction from my *guru* to carry out this mission. That is nothing less than the regeneration of my motherland. ... India must become dynamic and effect the conquest of the world through her spirituality.' Thus, at every step, Swami Vivekananda was conscious in his life of the task his *guru* had allocated to him.

It cannot be argued that, unlike Sri Ramakrishna, Swamiji did not bind himself with various restrictions in his daily observances, nor did he spend years after years in spiritual practice. He did not do these, simply because they were not necessary for him. It may be noted that during his days with Sri Ramakrishna, the Master would be scrupulous about his own food habits or the persons with whom he mixed. But he allowed Narendra to eat anything or mix with anyone; for he said that his chief disciple was a huge forest fire capable of devouring all impurities. It is this very reason, and also the fact that the nature of his work made any such observances impossible, that compelled Swami Vivekananda to act differently from his Master with regard to the preliminaries of life. As for spiritual practices, what the Swami did was not negligible; moreover, Sri Ramakrishna had already endowed him with the experien
of *nirvikalpa samādhi*, and through it, t
knowledge of Brahman. Thus he had p
pared his chief disciple for the role of t
world teacher that he was to be.

II

We have shown so far that, in his Li
Swami Vivekananda represented Sri Rama
krishna fully, though the spheres of action
the two personalities were different. No
we shall turn our attention to an aspect
the Swami's teaching which is very oft
pointed out as not in accordance with
Master's. This is the preaching of Advai
Vedānta by the Swami. Sometimes, it is sa
that Sri Ramakrishna was a *bhakta*, wh
Swamiji was a *jñānin*; and while the form
preached devotion and the realization of G
through that as the only aim of life, the latt
emphasized the *jñāna-mārga* or the path
knowledge as well as service to humanit
These, they say, were Swamiji's own idea
Reserving the discussion on service to the ne
section, we shall here take up the question
this apparent divergence between the teac
ings of the Master and his disciple.

This kind of difference between the teac
ings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji is p
ceived only by those who have a superfi
understanding of both; a deeper study wo
reveal to them the truth in a clearer li
On the other hand, those acquainted with S
Ramakrishna's life need not be reminded th
he practised the Advaita *sādhanā* under
sannyāsin guru Sri Totapuri, after being i
tiated by him as a *sannyāsin*; and that, af
practising only for three days, he had th
experience of *nirvikalpa samādhi*. Even af
the departure of Sri Totapuri from Daks
neshwar, Sri Ramakrishna desired to rem
in that state of *nirvikalpa*, and actually r
mained so for full six months. Apart fr
these, what one very often forgets is th
along with the attainment of *nirvik*
samādhi, the Master had another realiza
about which Swami Saradananda says in h



(California, 1900)

'He had such a majestic presence that people stepped aside to let him pass by.'

Viraja Devi

'As he would walk down market street, people would stand aside to let him pass, or turn around and ask: 'Who is the Hindu prince ?'

Ida Ansell

(California, 1900)

'His power lay, perhaps, in the courage he gave others. He did not ever seem to be conscious of himself at all. It was the other man who interested him.'

Miss MacLeod

Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Līlāprasaṅga (pp. 262-63 of *Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master*): 'He came to feel in his heart of hearts that the realization of non-duality was the ultimate aim of all kinds of *sādhanās*. For, having performed *sādhanās* according to the teachings of all the main religious denominations prevalent in Bharata, he had already been convinced that they all took the aspirants towards the non-dual plane. Asked about the non-dual state, he therefore said to us over and over again: "It is the finale, my child, the acme, which comes of itself in the life of aspirants, as ultimate development of their love for God. Know it to be the last word of all faiths, and faiths are paths (and not the goal)".' The author of the *Līlāprasaṅga* goes on to state that, from the time the Master had this realization, he was imbued with 'unbounded catholicity' and an 'extraordinary sympathy' towards all religions, and that he 'cut to the quick any one-sidedness in religion'.

One may question: Why, then, did Sri Ramakrishna talk of non-dualistic Vedānta very little? Why passages of such import are not found in abundance in the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, if he had believed the non-dualistic realization to be the ultimate Truth? The author of the *Līlāprasaṅga* would answer such doubts thus: 'The Master accepted all the doctrines of non-dualism (Advaita), qualified non-dualism (Viśiṣṭādvaita), and dualism (Dvaita). But he used to say: "Those three doctrines are accepted by the human mind according to its progress. ... Finally, where man reaches the ultimate limit of spiritual progress with the help of *sādhanā*, he experiences the *nirguṇa* nature of the Divine Mother and remains in oneness with Her."' Thus it can be seen that, though Sri Ramakrishna accepted the realization of Advaita as the ultimate goal of man, he fully realized that it was not for everyone to practise it. 'Thus, although he was of opinion that Advaita knowledge was the ultimate truth, he always taught the general public, with its hankering for worldly objects, the truth of qualified monism, and not unoften, even of the love of God after the manner of a dualist.' Each has to take up the path most suited to him, from wherever he stands. Therefore, the paths of Dvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita have a place in religion, inasmuch as they are helpful to aspirants to take to the spiritual path more easily. It is for this very reason that the Master spoke very little about the non-dual aspect of God when he spoke to householders. And, it should be remembered that the instructions recorded in *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* were mostly addressed to householders, and not to monks. When he taught the would-be monks, he took them aside and gave instructions on Advaita. In spite of this fact, we come across statements in his sayings such as: 'Māyā is of two kinds—one leading toward God (Vidyā Māyā) and the other leading away from God (Avidyā Māyā).' He used to say, also, that *ajñāna* is a thorn which has to be removed by another thorn, namely *jñāna*, and then, both are to be thrown away at the end. Through these instructions, Sri Ramakrishna clearly showed that he upheld the Upaniṣadic teaching that *sādhanā* etc. only serve the purpose of removing the *ajñāna* or ignorance, under the influence of which one believes himself to be bound and so on. Actually, no one was ever bound and the *jīva* was never different from Brahman. This idea, too, we can very often find in the *Gospel*: 'What is the relation between the *jīva* and the Paramātman, the individual and the universal Self? If a piece of timber is thrown across the flowing Gaṅgā, one side of the water will appear to be separated from the other. In the same way, the idea of ego makes the soul seem distinct from the supreme Self. Really, there is no division between them.'

Thus it will be evident that Swami Vivekananda's preaching of Advaita Vedānta was not against the teachings of the Master. Besides, Swamiji, too, fully accepted the need of other paths and preached them also. The religion he preached was not cramped within any steel frame. His was a religion vast as the sky and deep as the ocean. His book *Bhakti-Yoga* is a masterpiece of *bhakti* literature. It may be questioned then, How is it that he preached the Advaita Vedānta far and wide, among the householders in the East as well as the West, if his Master felt that it was not suitable for them? Yes, it is true he spoke of Advaita everywhere. But, we have to remember that when Sri Ramakrishna talked of religion to somebody, it was only for the spiritual transformation of that person. Swamiji, too, had this purpose in view, but not at all times and in all places. For he was fully aware that the Advaita Vedānta was not for the masses. He describes Advaita as 'the fairest flower of philosophy and religion that any country, in any age, has produced, where human thought attains its highest expression, and even goes beyond the mystery which seems to be impenetrable'. But he immediately adds: 'It is too abstruse, too elevated, to be the religion of the masses. Even in India, its birth-place, where it has been ruling supreme for the last three thousand years, it has not been able to permeate the masses.' Then, what was the purpose he had in mind when he spoke of Advaita Vedānta to large audiences, both in India and abroad? He had different reasons for doing so in either place. In India, he found that it was time to get rid of the 'weakening mysticisms' and the 'wailing and weeping' which were having sway over the minds of the masses. He felt that, to infuse strength amongst them, to lead them on to a higher stage from where they stood, the message of the Upaniṣads—'*Abhīḥ*'—the message of strength was most necessary. He himself explains this: 'I heard once the complaint made that I was preaching too much of Advaita and too little of Dualism. Ay, I know what grandeur, what oceans of love, what infinite ecstatic blessings and joy there are in the dualistic . . . religion. I know it all. But this is not the time with us to weep, even in joy; we have had weeping enough; no more is this time for us to become soft. . . . What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills, which nothing can resist. . . . That can only be created, established, and strengthened, by understanding and realizing the ideal of the Advaita, that ideal of the oneness of all.' Thus, it was for awakening the people of India from the stupor they were in, that he preached the vigorous message of Advaita Vedānta.

In the West, he had to face audiences, highly intellectual, critical, and scientific-minded. They had to be convinced rationally, if they were to accept any religion or philosophy, rejecting their mood of agnosticism. This purpose could be achieved only through Advaita Vedānta, which could stand the assault of modern science and the keenest reasoning. And once the audience was convinced about the need of religion and its scientific basis, it was not difficult to persuade them to take up any religious practice—*bhakti*, *karma*, or *yoga*; for Vedānta is not in conflict with any religious system, as it accepts them all as necessary steps to the highest pinnacle of Truth—the oneness of all. Thus we find Swamiji preaching *bhakti* as well as *jñāna* wherever his purpose was spiritual transformation of his disciples—as it was in Thousand Island Park. But when it came to convincing anyone about the need and rational basis of religion, he had to take his stand on the unassailable ground of Advaita Vedānta. And, incidentally, in India too, his preaching of Advaita had the desired effect of awakening the intellectuals, dazed by the glamour of the West, to the glories of India's past.

Lastly, we may draw attention to Swami Vivekananda's remark that he himself was all *jñāna* outside, but all *bhakti* within, while reverse was the case with Sri Ramakrishna. In fact, we find this characteristic of Swamiji becoming explicit in his life at times. In a poignant letter to Mrs. Ole Bull, he writes: 'Peace have I sought, but the heart, that seat of *bhakti,* would not allow me to find it.' It is therefore clear that Swamiji knew the glories of *bhakti,* but felt it his duty to carry the message of his Master to every nook and corner of the world—the message of the glory of the Ātman—and declare to the world: 'Ye sons of Immortality, arise, awake, and find your true nature.'

III

Another comment, faintly heard at times, is that, contrary to Sri Ramakrishna's warning that 'building of hospitals and dispensaries' cannot be a substitute for the love of God, Swami Vivekananda started various humanitarian activities in India, through the Order founded by him. These activities may be, no doubt, useful to society, but they are not 'religion'. In fact, this aspect of monasticism was something new to India. Where are we to find justification for this in Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings?

We have already shown that Sri Ramakrishna was fully aware that Narendra was destined to do lot of work in life. If these 'works' were not what Swami Vivekananda actually did, what else could they be? Apart from this question, we can find evidence in the teachings of the Master himself that he felt the need of service to humanity with the right spirit as a path to salvation, though he did not believe in humanitarianism, divorced from religion, as the ideal of man.

When, during his wanderings, Swamiji reached Kanya Kumari, the southernmost point of India, he sat on the seashore and pondered on what he had seen all along throughout India—starving people steeped in misery. He was reminded of his Master's words: 'An empty stomach is no good for religion.' And here, at Kanya Kumari, it became clear to him that 'religion was no longer an isolated province of human endeavour'. 'It embraced the whole scheme of things, not only the Dharma, the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the meditation, the sages, the asceticism of great monks, the vision of the Most High, but the heart of the people, their degeneration, their sorrows, their woes.'

Even at the beginning, when he had plans for humanitarian activities, he met with opposition from some of his *gurubhāis,* who challenged him to prove that his ideas were in accord with their Master's. Swamiji flared up at this and questioned their understanding of Sri Ramakrishna and told with great fervour: 'How do you know that these ideas are not in keeping with his ideas? Do you want to shut up Sri Ramakrishna, the embodiment of infinite ideas, within your own limits?' It is well to remember that he got the idea of seeing 'Śiva in the *jīva*' from his Master, and when he first heard these words from the lips of his Master, he told everyone around him that he had got a new light in life that day.

We should not also forget that Sri Ramakrishna did not teach his would-be monastic disciples only for the sake of their personal salvation; for he could have conferred on them God-realization even by a touch. And, as for the disciples themselves, it was not so difficult a task to work for their own *mukti.* Therefore, the Master's purpose in training his disciples, particularly Swami Vivekananda, was to make them capable of bearing the burden of a great mission—the raising of India spiritually and propagation of the universal religion of Vedānta throughout the world. As the Master said of Narendra: 'The day when Naren comes in contact with suffering and misery, the pride of his character will melt into a mood of infinite compassion. His strong faith in himself will be an instrument to re-establish in discouraged souls the confidence and faith they have lost.'

True to his Master's words, Swami Vivekananda wandered throughout the length and breadth of India to gauge the nature of his work. And he found that India was *not* ready for spirituality. Before religion could be taught to the masses, they required to be fed, clothed, and educated. The old superstitions were to be driven off; the sentimentalism that clouded the minds of people would have to be replaced by the strength-giving message of the Upaniṣads; and the intellectuals under the spell of Western materialism had to be brought back to the fold of their mother religion. To accomplish this colossal task would be the laying of a foundation on which the spiritual edifice of India could be raised. And it was with this end in view, he founded the Ramakrishna Mission. He inspired and called upon the lay devotees to gird up their loins for the struggle ahead. The leviathan of India was steeped in *tamas,* darkness; she was deep asleep. And to awaken her from this, *rajas,* activity was the foremost need. Over and above these, his heart wept for the downtrodden, for the suffering millions, and he cried out: 'I do not care for a religion that cannot feed the hungry millions.' Moreover, Swamiji opened up a new path in the practice of Vedānta—that of service. If the whole world, if all the living beings are, in reality, Brahman Itself, why not serve them and attain the Vedāntic realization of oneness of all existence? If worship of stone images can bring about inner transformation, why not the worship of living images of God? It is in this spirit that he wrote:

> 'These are His manifold forms before thee,
> Rejecting them, where seekest thou for God?
> Who loves all beings, without distinction,
> He indeed is worshipping best his God.'

Thus, Swamiji brought forth the grand message of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads from the caves and forests, where it was hidden, to be carried into the field and the cottage and, in this way, harmonized Vedānta with the modern ideal of humanitarianism.

Therefore, the life and message of Sri Ramakrishna got the true interpretation at the hands of his chief disciple—not merely in his preaching, but in concrete action. And this was the beginning of intense activity throughout India for shaping a resurgent India in all fields of life.

IV

We have so far dealt with some of the aspects of the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda, regarding which doubts are occasionally raised as to whether they represent the ideas of his Master truly. In this concluding section, we shall merely point out those aspects of Swamiji's life and teachings, which both apparently and intrinsically represent the ideas of his Master.

One such is the harmony of religions. True to Sri Ramakrishna's teaching that so many religions are all like so many paths leading towards the same goal, Swamiji did not hold the brief for any particular sect or religion. Though he represented Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, his catholicity of outlook was one of the main reasons for his being the most popular figure there. He asserted there with forceful oratory his conviction in a universal religion without limit of time or space. 'There was to be no other dogma but the divinity inherent in man and his capacity for indefinite evolution.' In his paper on Hinduism, the Swami invoked the gods of every religion, and finally, expressed the hope that 'upon the banner of every religion will soon be written in spite of resistance: "Help and not fight", "Assimilation and not destruction", and "Harmony and peace and not dissension"'.

His spirit of liberalism, too, was a direct legacy from his Master. As it is said in his biography about his period of discipleship: 'Sometimes, Naren revealed a tendency to fanaticism. Sri Ramakrishna would admonish him: "My boy, try to see the Truth from all angles and through every perspective." This tendency to bigotry disappeared when Naren realized the oneness of all spiritual endeavour and religious belief.' Thus Sri Ramakrishna weaned away his chief disciple from outright criticism of even the most diabolical of sects. Once when Narendra went on railing against one of them for a long time; Sri Ramakrishna heard it quietly and put in: 'Well, well, perhaps, every house may have a back door. Who knows?' And this silenced his rebellious disciple!

Another point Swamiji emphasized constantly was directly in line with his Master. It is that religion does not consist in mere talk, but in realization: 'Religion is realization; not talk, nor doctrine, however beautiful they may be. It is being and becoming, not hearing and acknowledging; it is the whole soul becoming changed into what it believes.' And, like his Master, he assured everyone that religion can be realized.

We find, therefore, that Swami Vivekananda represented Sri Ramakrishna in every way. His life was only an extension of his Master's and Sri Ramakrishna's mission on earth found its completion in Swami Vivekananda. The tree of spiritual renaissance which sprouted at Kamarpukur and grew at Dakshineshwar, put forth its blossoms in the life of Swami Vivekananda. Let us gather the honey from these blossoms and taste the sweetness of true religion.

Through Swamiji, the world has come to know of Sri Ramakrishna. But for him, very few could have understood our Master's genius. ... We had strong faith in Swamiji's words. I tell you, you must have infinite faith in these two great souls, Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and work for them. ... Where else would you find a holy man like Naren?

Swami Brahmananda

Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji are the two sides of the same coin. Among us (the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna), Swamiji alone truly understood the Master. ... It is impossible to understand the Master without understanding him.

Swami Premananda

No one can understand the Master properly who deviates from the interpretation offered by Swamiji. ... We could have understood very little of the Master unless Swamiji opened our eyes.

Swami Saradananda

The Master's words are not as easy of comprehension as they appear to be on the surface; their meaning is sublime. We, of course, did not think so deeply. He imparted instruction, and we listened without thinking how profound it was. It was Swamiji who pointed this out to us When he interpreted the deeper significance of the Master's utterances, we would be struck dumb. We, too, had heard them, but without the least thought that they were so profound. That is why I ask you to hear the Master's words and study Vivekananda's life.

Swami Adbhutananda

Swami Vivekananda was the child of Ramakrishna. It was his blessed Master who, by the magic of his divine touch, brought into play the latent greatness of his soul. Being the most worthy disciple of his Master, he followed the footsteps of Sri Ramakrishna.

Swami Abhedananda

GOD IN SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S PHILOSOPHY

By Sri Amiya Kumar Mazumdar

[Sri Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, M.A., is the Principal of the Krishnagar Degree College, Nadia. In this thoughtful article, he deals with the concept of 'God' as found in Swami Vivekananda's philosophy, and shows how it harmonizes the ideas of the personal and impersonal aspects of Reality.]

The celebrated ontological proof of Descartes was refuted by Kant on the ground that the proof involved an illegitimate passage from thought to reality: the reality of God was proved from the *idea* of God. Swami Vivekananda was aware of the hazard of *proving* God through the help of an ontological argument. He, therefore, asserted that the best proof of God's existence lies in the experience (*anubhava*) a seer has of God. This experience is mystical or supra-logical. The Vedic sage proclaimed: 'Hear, ye children of immortal bliss! even ye that reside in higher spheres! I have *known* the Ancient One, the supreme Person, who is beyond all darkness, all delusion: knowing Him alone, you shall be saved from death over again.'

According to Swami Vivekananda, this is the best proof a Hindu sage gives about God when he says confidently, 'I have realized the Self; I have seen God'. The Swami, in his younger days, came across such a proof when he met Sri Ramakrishna who answered the Swami's question, 'Have you seen God?' by saying, 'Yes, I see Him more vividly than I see you, and you can also see Him'.

Direct experience of God is the only positive proof of God's existence, not only because other proofs leave a gap between the prover and the proved, but because religion is not a dogma with the Hindus, but realization of the potential divinity of man. Since every man is potentially divine, or to put it in a different way, man and God, the individual soul and the Universal Soul are basically identical, no proof of God short of realization of this identity is of any value.

Vivekananda's conception of God is basically the Vedāntic conception of God—everything is divine—'All this is, indeed, Brahman'. But, while in Śaṅkara's view, there is a di tinction between the Absolute and God, i Vivekananda's view the distinction is not ab solute. God is the Absolute endowed wit Māyā, says Śaṅkara, and since the world i eternally negated in Brahman, God as creato of the world is not ultimately real. Henc from the orthodox point of view, Brahma (Absolute) alone is real, God (Īśvara-qualified or determinate Brahman) is ulti mately unreal.

Personal God or Īśvara is a living and dynam ic reality according to Swami Vivekananda 'The difference between personal and impe sonal is this, that the personal is only a ma and the impersonal idea is that He is th angel, the man, the animal, and yet some thing more which we cannot see, because it personality includes all personalities, is th sum total of everything in the universe, an infinitely more besides. As the one fi coming into the world is manifesting itself i so many forms, and yet is infinitely more be sides, so is the Impersonal' (*Complete Wor of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. II. 1958. P 319-20).

Although the idea of Impersonal God is th highest idea according to the Swami, yet it i true that the concept of Personal God stand on a better base when strengthened by th concept of Impersonal God. A generaliza tion ending in the concept of Personal Go can never be universally acceptable. Fo Personal God must necessarily have attri butes. He is all-merciful. He is all-good. Ou experience, however, shows that this worl is a mixture of good and evil. Therefore, th acceptance of Personal God as the ultimat

Reality entails exclusion of evil and suffering from the domain of Personal God. This means, eventually, acceptance of two realities—Personal God and personal devil, the former being the source of everything that is good, the latter the source of everything that is evil. This metaphysical dualism is not, however, tenable. We see, therefore, that the idea of Personal God is not a true generalization. We have to go beyond, to the Impersonal.

The Impersonal God is unaffected by the problem of evil. The problem of evil is the standing difficulty in a theistic conception of God. If God is all-good and all-merciful, why evil at all in His creation? Again, if God is omnipotent, why can He not remove evil from the world? These are baffling problems. Once we accept the Impersonal God of the Vedānta as ultimate, these problems disappear. According to the Upaniṣads, good and evil are aspects of the same reality; death and immortality are two sides of the same God. Good and evil belong to the relative world, they are phenomenal. What is good for me may be bad for you. The Swami, therefore, concludes that, like every other thing, there is an evolution in good and evil, too. There is something which in its evolution we call, in one degree, good and in another, evil. The Swami gives an example in support of his conclusion. The storm that kills my friend, I call evil, but that may have saved the lives of hundreds of thousands of people by killing the bacilli in the air. They call it good, but I call it evil.

The Impersonal God is not a relative God, It is the Absolute. It would be wrong to say that It is either good or bad. In fact, It is beyond good and evil.

The Swami asks the question: What is the effect of accepting such an Impersonal Being as ultimate? What shall we gain by such a conception? He replies: 'The Personal God will remain but on a better basis. He has been strengthened by the Impersonal. We have seen that, without the Impersonal, the Personal cannot remain. If you mean to say there is a Being entirely separate from this universe, who has created this universe just by His will out of nothing, that cannot be proved. Such a state of things cannot be. But if we understand the idea of the Impersonal, then the idea of the Personal can remain there, also. This universe, in its various forms, is but the various readings of the same Impersonal. When we read it with the five senses, we call it the material world. If there be a being with more senses than five, he will read it as something else. If one of us gets the electrical sense, he will see the universe as something else again. There are various forms of that same Oneness, of which all these various ideas of worlds are but various readings, and the Personal God is the highest reading that can be attained to of that Impersonal by the human intellect' (*ibid.*, Vol. I, 1957, p. 377).

It follows, therefore, that the Personal God is not swallowed up by, or dissolved in, the Absolute or Impersonal God. Rather, the Personal God is sustained and strengthened by the Impersonal. We should not, however, hasten to the conclusion that there are two Gods. Reality is one: the Personal God and Impersonal God are like ice and water. Ice is frozen water, and when heat is applied to ice, it melts and is transformed into water.

The all-pervading nature of God is the main tune on which the Swami ceaselessly harps. It is not a mere theoretical concept hidden in the scripture, but has to be a living reality. It is with this object in view that the Swami urges that pathway to God is through one's own self. 'I am God'—proclaimed the seers of the Upaniṣads. The all-pervadingness of God is to be realized gradually through realizing the identity of one's own self with one's neighbours, one's motherland, and finally, with the universe as a whole. Once we remember this keynote, it would be easy to follow Vivekananda when he says that the soil of India is his highest heaven. The entire Indian nation is God for Swami Vivekananda and service to the nation is his religion. As the Swami puts it: 'For the next fifty years, this alone shall be our keynote—this, our great Mother India. Let all other vain gods disappear for the time being from our minds. This is the only God that is awake, our own race, everywhere His hands, everywhere His feet, everywhere His ears, He covers everything' (*ibid.*, Vol. III, 4th Ed., p. 300).

The Personal God is a reading (of course the highest reading) of the Impersonal or the Absolute. What does it really mean? According to the Advaita Vedānta, the Impersonal God or the Absolute is differenceless Consciousness, one without a second. In the superconscious state of *nirvikalpa samādhi*, the *sādhaka* realizes his identity with Brahman, his ego is eliminated, and the world of multiplicity vanishes. But how did 'many' or multiplicity arise out of the undifferentiated One? To answer this question, the Advaitist introduces the doctrine of Māyā. The world of multiplicity is *anirvacanīya*, indescribable, for it is neither real nor unreal. The world is not real, because world-cognition is sublated in Brahman-consciousness, nor is it unreal, because it appears and is not anything absurd like the 'son of a barren woman'.

According to Vivekananda, Māyā is not a theory for the explanation of the world, but a statement of facts as they exist. What are these facts? First, that the very basis of our existence is contradiction; that wherever there is good, there must also be evil, and wherever there is evil, there must be some good, wherever there is life, death must follow as its shadow, and everyone who smiles will have to weep and *vice versa*. Death is stalking day and night over this earth of ours but, at the same time, we cherish the fond hope that we shall live eternally. A question was once asked of king Yudhiṣṭhira: 'What is the most wonderful thing on this earth?' The king replied: 'Every day people are dying around us, and yet men think they will never die.' This is Māyā. The increase of knowledge results in increase of misery. The least amount of material prosperity that we enjoy is elsewhere producing equal amount of misery. This is Māyā. These are facts which have to be accepted. The question 'why should it be so' cannot be answered, because the question itself cannot be logically formulated. It is common knowledge that good cannot always be done through good, but sometimes it has to be done through evil methods. This, again, is Māyā.

The way in which '*māyā*' is explained by the Swami has a special significance. And this will be clear if we remember Sri Ramakrishna's teaching on allied subjects. In the course of his conversation with Narendranath at Dakshineswar in 1884, Sri Ramakrishna was explaining the tenets of Vaiṣṇava religion, and after the discussion was over, he said to himself in a semi-conscious state: 'Compassion for creatures! compassion for creatures! Thou fool! An insignificant worm crawling on earth—thou to show compassion to others! Who art thou to show compassion? No, it cannot be. It is not compassion for others, but rather service to man, looking upon him as the veritable manifestation of God.'

On one occasion, when Narendranath had tasted the bliss of *nirvikalpa samādhi*—the highest realization, and implored his Master to allow him to remain in that blissful state indefinitely, Sri Ramakrishna sharply rebuked him saying: 'For shame! How can you ask such things? I thought you were a vast receptacle of life, and here you wish to stay absorbed in personal joy like an ordinary man. This realization will become so natural to you by the grace of the Mother that, in your normal state, you will realize the One Divinity in all beings; you will bring spiritual consciousness to men and assuage the misery of the humble and the poor.'

Vivekananda realized the blissful state of *nirvikalpa samādhi* and yet he lived on the material plane to carry out the instruction of his Master to serve man as manifestation of

God, to raise the humble and the poor to their full stature.

The world was for Vivekananda a reality and not an illusion, since the mission of his life, viz. service of humanity, had to be carried out through the medium of the world. In other words, the world must be there, so that ethical and spiritual endeavours could be fruitful. To educate men, to restore their lost individuality, to raise the Indian masses from abject suffering, to rouse the sleeping Indian nation from indefinite slumber, Swami Vivekananda regarded this world of ours as the vehicle through which his mission was to be fulfilled. It is reasonable therefore to hold that he did not reject the world as unreal straightway.

It would, however, be hazardous to conclude that Vivekananda was not a true Advaitist inasmuch as he did not regard the world as false (*mithyā*). In orthodox Advaitism, also, the distinction is drawn between the *vyāvahārika* (phenomenal) and the *pāramārthika* (transcendental). For Swami Vivekananda, the world was real so long as his mission in life was to be fulfilled. After his work was done, the Swami was convinced that he would transcend the material world and merge in the supreme Oneness.

It is stated in the *Life of Swami Vivekananda* that he practised severe austerities in the springs of Kshir Bhavani, and the change that occurred in his mind at that time was indicated in the following words: 'All my patriotism is gone. Everything is gone. Now it is only Mother! I have been very wrong.' Again, the Swami said: 'Since I heard that divine voice, I have ceased making any more plans. Let these things be as Mother wills.' The Swami surrendered himself completely to the Divine Mother and was pining for realization of the Truth.

In one of his letters from California, in 1900, the Swami wrote: 'Bonds are breaking —love dying, work becoming tasteless—the glamour is off life. Now, only the voice of the Master calling—I come, Lord, I come. "Let the dead bury the dead, follow thou Me"—I come, my beloved Lord, I come. Yes, I come. Nirvāṇa is before me. I feel it at times, the same infinite ocean of peace, without a ripple, a breath. . . . Oh! it is so calm.'

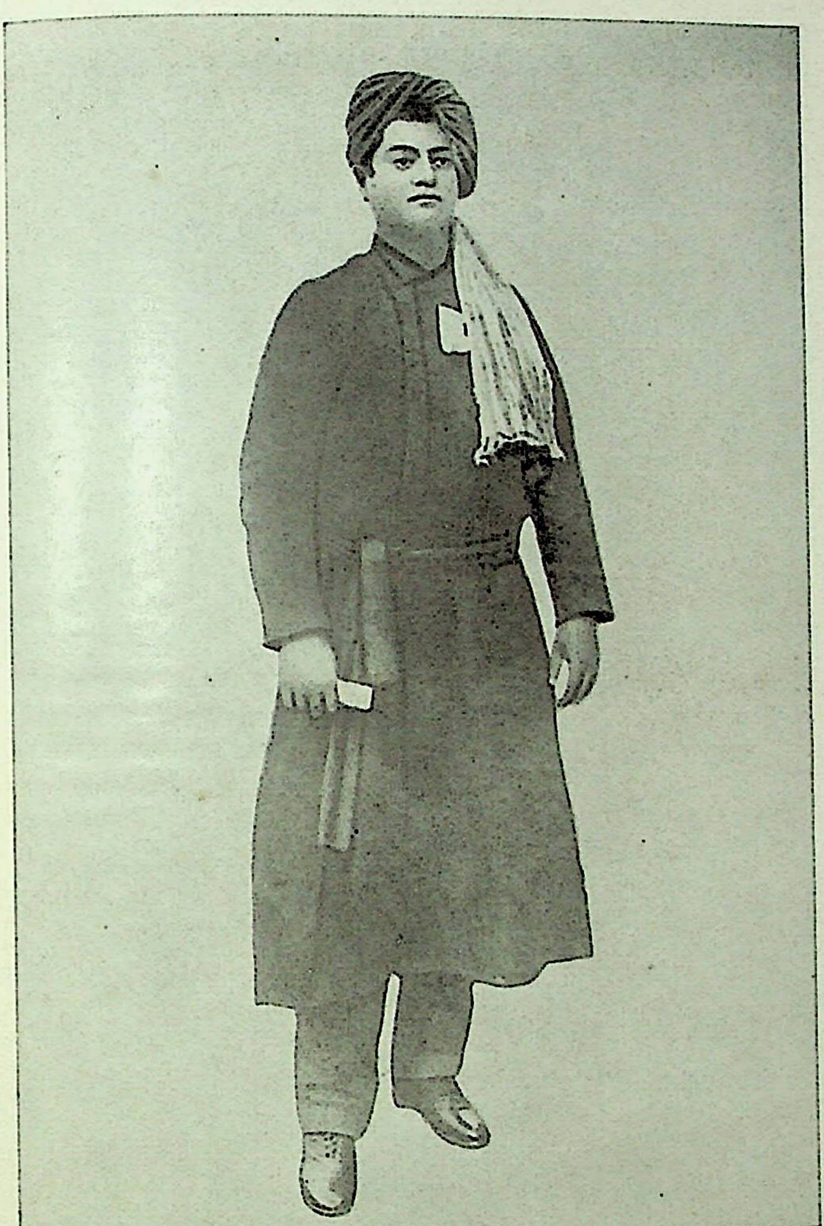
It has already been stated that, in the Swami's view, Personal God is necessary for the spiritual aspirant; only, It is not ultimate. Since it is difficult for ordinary seekers after Truth to grasp the Indeterminate and Impersonal God straightway, the aspirant passes through worship of Personal God, which is but a support during his spiritual childhood. Once the highest Truth is reached and the Impersonal is realized, it is no more necessary for the *sādhaka* to come down to worship the Personal God. It follows, therefore, that the Swami aimed at a synthesis of the two great teachings of the Upaniṣads: *'Ekamevādvitīyam'*—Reality is One without a second, and *'Sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ Brahma'*—All this is Brahman.

Swami Vivekananda rejected the analogy that there must be a Personal God as creator of the world since a pot implies a potter as its creator. This argument presents an anthropomorphic conception of God which is not logically tenable. Besides, modern science proves that man's personal comfort, his well-being, and material prosperity are the result of man's exertions, being his conquest of nature, and not God's favour. There is yet another evil connected with the view that Personal God is ultimate. Tyranny and priestcraft have prevailed wherever people have looked upon Personal God as the supreme Reality without caring to know if there is anything beyond. According to the Swami, priestcraft and tyranny go hand in hand. How did priestcraft originate? Some strong men in old times got people into their hands and warned them that they would be ruined if they disobeyed the strong men. They presented religion as something otherworldly and God as supernatural. Priests tyrannized people by extorting from them money and demanding various other things from them assuring them that, by obeying the commands of the priests, they would enjoy perfect happiness in heaven.

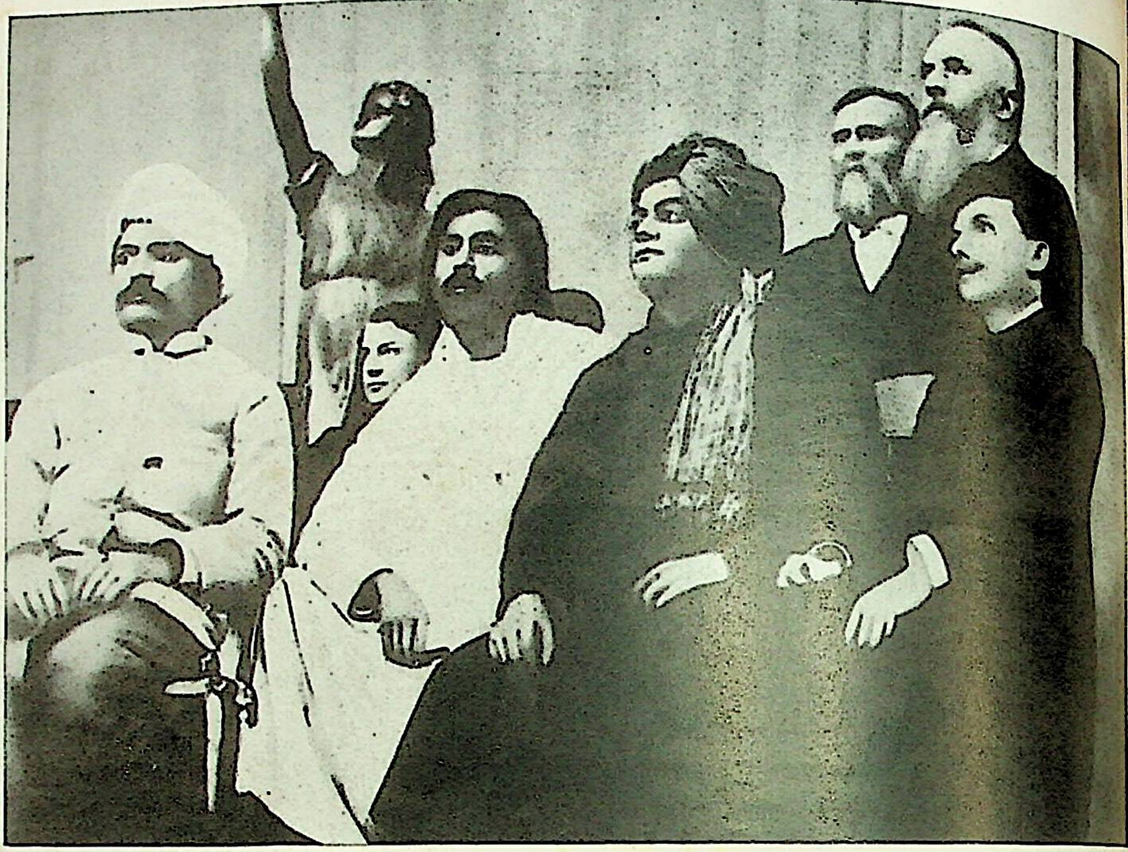
In repudiating the view put forward by the priests that man's sins will be forgiven and he will enjoy happiness in heaven, the Swami pointed out that man is potentially divine and he is not sinful by nature. The only sin that man can commit is to show weakness. Therefore, the fond hope that he will enjoy happiness in heaven through the help of the priests, in spite of his misdeeds, is based on unreality.

The Swami also attacks the tirade against the conception of Personal God as made from the Bauddha and Jaina standpoints. According to the Hindus, belief in the law of Karma is foundational. There cannot be a cause without an effect, the present must have had its cause in the past, and will have its effect in the future. The Hindu says that *karma* is inert and not spirit; therefore, some *caitanya* (spirit) is necessary to bring this cause to fruition. If I sow a seed and pour water suitably, the seed will grow up into a plant, and no *caitanya* would be necessary, so argues the Bauddha. The Jains believe in souls, unlike the Bauddhas, and argue that since human souls are *caitanya,* there is no necessity for a God.

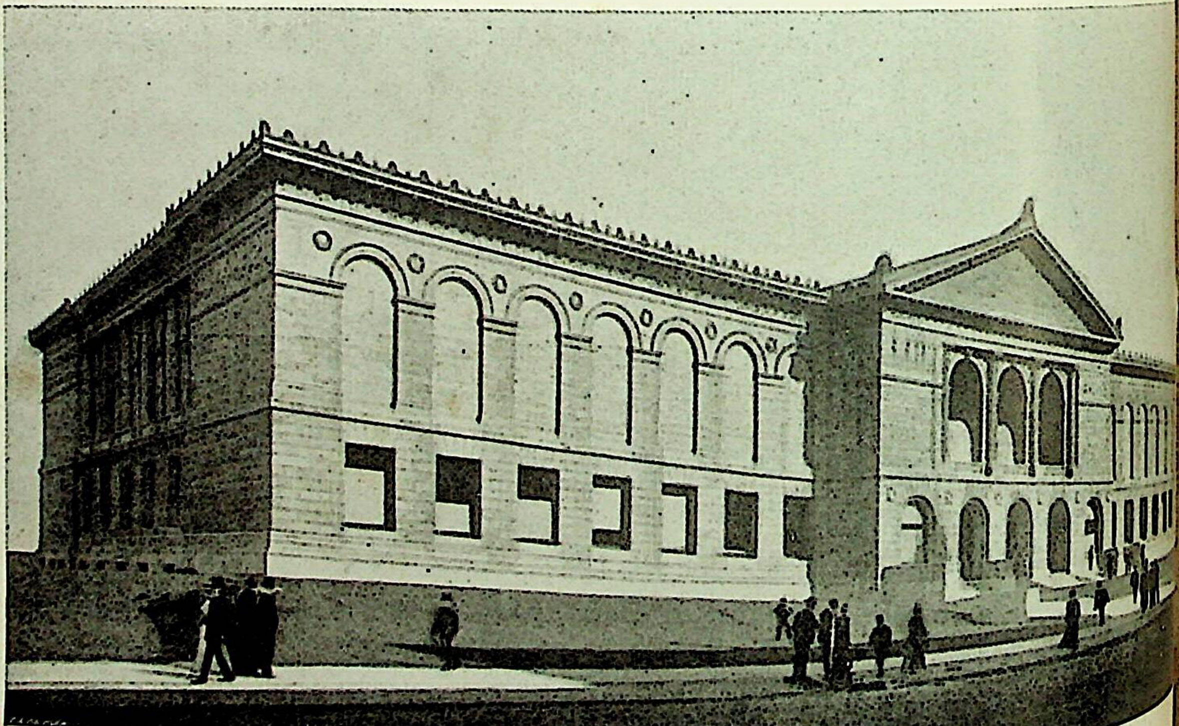
The question that remains to be settled finally is this: How far is it appropriate to use the phrase 'highest reading' in regard to God? Are comparative estimates like 'higher' and 'lower' applicable to the Divine Being who is the supreme Reality? When the Swami used expressions like 'better base', 'highest reading', etc., all that he had in mind was the difference of approach to Reality through ratiocination or discursive reasoning on the one hand, and *nirvikalpa samādhi,* supreme realization, on the other. The supreme Reality cannot, certainly, be divided into higher and lower, better and worse. An intellectual approach and the intuitive approach to Reality are not, however, antagonistic in Vivekananda's view. Intuition (*anubhava*) is the perfection of intellect or ratiocination. Intuition is intellect purified. Hence the problem 'how can the supreme Reality have two contraries, personality and impersonality' disappears, once we remember that the truly Indeterminate can manifest itself in any manner whatsoever. There is no limit to Its expression, nor is It guided by any phenomenal law. To say that the Impersonal cannot become personal is again to determine the Indeterminate which is a futile attempt. To the ordinary man, this is certainly a mystery. This mystery can be solved not through understanding but through love. Said the Swami: 'Who can understand the throes of the love of the *gopīs*—the very ideal of love, love that wants nothing, love that even does not care for heaven, love that does not care for anything in this world, or the world to come? ... And here, through this love of *gopīs,* has been found the only solution of the conflict between the Personal and the Impersonal God. ... We know that it is philosophical to believe in an Impersonal God immanent in the universe, of whom everything is but a manifestation. At the same time, our souls hanker after something concrete, something which we want to grasp, at whose feet we can pour out our soul. ... The only thing that they (*gopīs*) understood was that He was Infinite Love, that was all. A great landmark in the history of religion is here, the ideal of love for love's sake.'



AS A DELEGATE TO THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS
(Chicago, September 1893)



ON THE PLATFORM AT THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS



THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO
(where the Parliament of Religions met)

VIVEKANANDA ON THE WORLD STAGE

By Swami Budhananda

[Swami Budhananda, a member of the Ramakrishna Order, is at present connected with the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York. In this illuminating article, he beautifully deals with the universal message of Swami Vivekananda and what it means to humanity for its real peace, progress, and solidarity.]

On Monday, the 11th of September 1893, in the afternoon, something peculiar happened in the spiritual history of man. The significance of that incident continues to unfold itself in the process of time. The venue was the Parliament of Religions sitting in the Hall of Columbus in the Art Institute of Chicago.

A number of delegates representing different religions of the world had made learned speeches. When it was impossible to put off his turn of speaking, the young monk Swami Vivekananda rose on his feet. Bowing mentally to Sarasvatī, the Goddess of wisdom, he opened his tremulous lips and addressed the vast audience—in which had gathered the cream of America's cultured men and women—as 'Sisters and Brothers of America'. One Mrs. Blodgett, who was one in the audience, relates: 'When that young man got up and said, "Sisters and Brothers of America", seven thousand people rose to their feet as a tribute to something, they knew not what. When it was over, I saw scores of women walking over the benches to get near him, and I said to myself: "Well, my lad, if you can resist that onslaught, you are indeed a god!"' Much later, Mrs. Blodgett became Swamiji's hostess in Los Angeles, of course, only after she was satisfied that her 'lad' was 'indeed a God'.

Why did these simple words, like 'sisters and brothers' move that sophisticated audience so deeply? Was it a sudden lapse into sentimentality? Was it for anything very new he had said? Such fraternal sentiments had been aired before by other speakers too. And Vivekananda had not yet spoken anything but those five words. It was not, therefore, the mere words that made the impact. It was the power of the sovereign quality of his being, transmuted by illumination, that passing through those sound waves quickened every soul like a flash of lightning. And they all responded instantaneously. They did not know what he was going to speak. But they surely felt that, at last, here was one who truly was the brother of everybody.

On the first day of the Parliament he spoke only some 476 words, which would not fill even a column of a daily newspaper. But when he had concluded, there was defeaning applause again. And, with that small speech, he came to be recognized as the greatest figure in the Parliament.

In the half dozen addresses he gave to the Parliament, the recurring themes of his message were: divinity of the human soul, the oneness of existence, non-duality of the God-head, and harmony of religion. In his final speech, he made that moving and memorable appeal to all religions for 'help and not fight, assimilation and not destruction, harmony and peace and not dissension'.

Swami Vivekananda gave a great message in the manner of one who had divine authority. Considering the newness of his message, it may be said that he was fortunate in having a unique response from the American audience. True, through their Transcendentalist Movement, Emerson, Thoreau, and Alcott had already introduced strands of Indian thought to the informed people of America. True too, that Walt Whitman had already echoed some Vedāntic ideas in his *Leaves of Grass*. The invitation of the open road, of the expanding horizon, and of the unlimited had already reached the mind of the American nation. Apart from this, as Ingersoll claimed, his relentless fight against traditional religions had shaken men's faith in theological dogmas and creeds, and thus prepared people's minds for the reception of Swami Vivekananda's message.

All of these factors, and some more, had undoubtedly created a mental climate in America. But this may not even fractionally explain the cause of Vivekananda's success in America. Indeed, even this word 'success' goes ill with Vivekananda. He never cared for success. If he cared for anything it was, in his own words, 'eternal love and service free'.

Vivekananda did not have it all very easy. There was organized opposition. There were determined vilifications from certain quarters who saw a peril to their self-interests in the growing popularity of the Swami. At this distance of time, we can very well see that it was good that Vivekananda's message had not an easy walkover. The contrary forces were, indeed, helpful like fire which proved the gold. Notwithstanding all anti-propaganda, Vivekananda's message was deeply appreciated by the cultured Americans, uncommitted to fundamentalism and bigotry. This not only proved the general goodness and receptivity of the people of America, but also the fact that this young nation at heart stayed a religious adventurer since the days of the Pilgrim Fathers.

But the receivers' qualities will not fully explain the success of the giver. In the last analysis, we have to seek for the fullness of the explanation in the preciousness of the gift itself, and withal, the greatness of the giver. Here was a message which brought the gladdest tidings of the noblest birthright of man—his own divinity and the inevitability of salvation. By making a unique juxtaposition of mere five words he created a spiritual history. Four of these words were taken from India and one from the West. 'Ye divinities on earth—sinners!' With these words, he struck the mightiest blow on the whole structure of 'soul-degenerating, cowardice-producing, negative, pessimistic thoughts' and set in motion a new wheel of Dharma of spiritual energism, freedom, conquest and creativity, of mastery over nature—inner and outer—of fearlessness, strength, love, and service—in one word, true universalism.

In this message, one not only received the intimation of one's divinity, but also of the spiritual unity of the universe. From such premises of spiritually experienced facts, logically flowed a new ethics for deliberation and action: 'Help and not fight, assimilation and not destruction, harmony and peace and not dissension.' The rationale and passion for human understanding and solidarity was never before or after more convincingly presented in any world forum. In a world habituated to listening to dogmatic voices of 'either or', or patronizing condescension of existing varieties of thoughts, his indeed was a refreshing and wonderfully inspiring message.

But more inspiring and wonderful was the man who gave this message. A saint who has realized the true nature of the Ātman is a wonderful person indeed. So says Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*. And Vivekananda was not a saint of the common run. To properly evaluate the quality of the wonder he personified and the profundity of the message he delivered, we have to travel far from Chicago to Dakshineswar in India.

II

'All the world's a stage,
And all men and women merely players.
They have their exits and entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.'

says Jaques, one of Shakespeare's characters in *As You Like It*.

Little do we know, though, that on this stage of the world, among actors, once in a while mingle unnoticed agents from above who play their parts in the fashion of men

They heighten the tone of the entire drama of human existence, and then, suddenly quit the stage, leaving it quickened with a new meaning, mighty and full of glory. Such was the entry and exit of Vivekananda in and from the world stage.

Swami Vivekananda was born in Calcutta on January 12, 1863 and passed away on the 4th of July 1902. The work he did in the short span of 39 years is an amazing record in human history. An exceptionally brilliant student with an athletic frame and robust mind, he met Sri Ramakrishna in 1881, and eventually became his disciple. Under the guidance of his wonderful teacher, this wonderful student attained highest spiritual realization even when he was in his twenties. Sri Ramakrishna passed away in 1886. After the death of Sri Ramakrishna, Vivekananda banded his world-renouncing brother disciples together, and established the nucleus of the monastic order, which later came to be known as the Ramakrishna Order. He travelled on foot all over India—all along practising austerities and making intensive study of scriptures as also of the problems of India and of men. He communed with India's great spirit, and discovered the solutions for India's various problems. He went to America in 1893, represented Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions, worked in America for four years spreading the message of Vedānta from coast to coast, helping earnest seeking people on the path of spiritual life. After returning to India in 1897, he roused the whole nation in self-regenerating efforts which eventually culminated in the freedom of India from British rule. He organized the whole following of Sri Ramakrishna on a broader basis, gave it the character of a dynamic movement, and trained his brother disciples and own disciples for that purpose. In 1899, Vivekananda once again went to America to inspect and inspire the Vedānta movement he had started there earlier. In 1900, he attended the Paris Congress of the History of Religions and returned to India at the end of the same year. The remaining days of his life were devoted to preaching, teaching, and consolidating the work done. He passed away in 1902 leaving behind him a world-wide spiritual movement.

On the very first occasion, when Narendranath visited Sri Ramakrishna, the master at once recognized that here was a great *ṛṣi* come down to earth to fulfil the purpose of the Divine Mother. To the utter surprise and embarrassment of the young man, Sri Ramakrishna stood before him with folded palms and showing him the regard due to a god said: 'I know, Lord, you are that ancient *ṛṣi* Nara, a part of Nārāyaṇa, who has incarnated himself this time to remove the miseries and the suffering of humanity.'

Then, for five years, went on a fascinating drama of divine love between the teacher and the disciple, the like of which one does not read in the spiritual history of the world. It was not easy even for Sri Ramakrishna to buckle this lion of a disciple. He roared, and showed his paw, and once in a while, gave one or two scratches too. Bondage he would not accept. He would not believe anything which was not demonstrated before his eyes. Sri Ramakrishna had to appear in an unending series of tests like a schoolboy before this exacting disciple.

The teacher had no other alternative but to be infinitely indulgent and forgiving. He was, indeed, afraid lest he should lose this gem, incomparable in the world. In his turn, Sri Ramakrishna tested his disciple more thoroughly, notwithstanding his vision about him.

One by one, many spiritual experiences were vouchsafed to Narendranath, and ultimately, the supreme realization of *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. It was a day of great joy for Sri Ramakrishna when Narendra accepted Kālī, the Divine Mother, as the counterpoise of Brahman, the Absolute. Then he was sure that his beloved disciple had attained that spiritual maturity without which he could not carry the fullness of his message.

Narendra had that traditional aspiration of remaining immersed in the supreme bliss of *samādhi*. But Sri Ramakrishna put him to shame saying that seeking selfish happiness was not for him. For he had to do the Mother's work. He had to impart spiritual knowledge and remove the miseries of the lowly and the afflicted.

Then one day came about the actual transmission of spiritual powers—the transference of the content of the old container into a new one. Narendranath said: 'I actually perceived a power current of subtle force like electricity entering into me from his body.' And Sri Ramakrishna himself said: 'By the force of this Śakti (Power), you will do many great things in the world, and only after that, you will go back.' 'It seems to me', said the disciple, 'it's that power, which makes me work and work, whirling me, as it were, in the vortex.'

In the making of Vivekananda, his powers, teachings, philosophy, and work had gone forth not only bringing him down from the high realms, not only Sri Ramakrishna's careful training, but also his entire spiritual realization. What Vivekananda spoke and did were actuated by the unerring vision, infinite love, and fathomless wisdom of an illumined saint of a very high order. What is more, he became a channel of God's love for man. This was the meaning of Sri Ramakrishna's becoming a 'fakir' after transferring all his spiritual realizations to him.

Vivekananda was by divine commission and compulsion an awakener of souls and remover of peoples' miseries and ignorance. This explains why the mere utterance of the words 'Sisters and Brothers of America' raised that vast audience on their feet. They, somehow, felt the charge of the prophet's heart behind those words.

III

The Upaniṣads teach us certain facts about Reality and our relation with It, such as: 'That Thou Art' (*tattvamasi*), 'I am Brahman' (*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*), 'This Self is Brahman' (*ayamātmā brahma*), 'Brahman is Consciousness' (*prajñānam brahma*). All these statements mean that man, the individual soul, the universe, and God are, in the ultimate analysis, one and the same pure consciousness.

These truths taught in the scriptures were experientially known facts with Vivekananda. Thus the doctrines of the divinity of the human soul, and spiritual oneness of the universe became the very breath of his life, as it were. He, undoubtedly, wore a body, but in that body he played his part on the world stage in a unique way. And this uniqueness of his role consists in the fact that he was all the time flaming in awareness of universal consciousness.

This awareness makes his philosophy of life a very different one from those of the academic philosophers, who do not normally acknowledge him as a philosopher. Nonetheless, he left behind him a spiritually illuminating, intellectually satisfying, and socially uplifting philosophy. In his philosophy, Vivekananda made transcendentalism answerable to human needs and human needs answerable to transcendentalism. His realism is concerned with the reality itself. Hence, it is not different from idealism.

The postulates of his philosophy may be culled at random from his sayings:

(1) He indeed is a *yogin* who sees himself in the universe and the whole universe in himself.

(2) Not one atom in the universe can move without dragging the whole world with it. There cannot be any progress without dragging the whole world along with it. There cannot be any progress without the whole world's following in its wake; and it is becoming clearer every day that the solution of any problem can never be attained on racial, or national, or any narrow ground. (Imagine, this was said before 1902.)

(3) I am thoroughly convinced that no individual or nation can live by holding

itself apart from the community of others. Whenever such an attempt has been made under false notions of greatness, policy, or holiness, the result has always been disastrous to the one who thus secluded himself.

(4) Each is responsible for the evil everywhere in the world. Not one can be happy until all are happy.

(5) All that unites with the universal is virtue. All that separates is sin. When you hurt anyone you hurt yourself, for you and your brother are one.

Vivekananda discovered and pointed out this one great fact that when the central illumination of life which is the knowledge of the Ātman-Brahman equation is lost, life and civilization become cluttered with contradictions and assailed by conflicts ending into futilities. Therefore, Swami Vivekananda worked in the very heart of human consciousness and strove to awaken the soul of man. He knew it for certain that once the soul was awakened in a man, all contradictions and conflicts between the Absolute and the relative, the past and the present, the new and the old, the head and the heart, science and religion, reason and faith, East and West, my 'doxy' and your 'doxy', my 'ism' and your 'ism' would just vanish.

His illuminative cries were therefore: 'Yield not to unmanliness, O man!' (*klaibyaṁ mā sma gamaḥ pārtha*), 'Ātman is not attained by one who has no strength' (*nāyamātmā balahīnena labhyaḥ*), Arise awake, stop not till the goal is reached' (*uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya varān nibodhata*), '*Abhīḥ, abhīḥ*'—'strength, strength', 'fearlessness, fearlessness'. These Vivekananda dinned into the languid ears of confounded humanity, for he knew that all our sins and sufferings, crimes and cruelties, exploitations and oppressions in the world originated from fear which was born of the ignorance about the Ātman-Brahman equation.

'Strength' he spoke to the oppressor, the powerful. 'Strength', he spoke to the oppressed and the weak. Strength, he knew, could liberate all—the captives of freedom who make slaves of men; and captives of slavery who make brutes of men. Strength is the realization of oneness of aught that exists.

On this enduring foundation of the knowledge of Ātman, Swami Vivekananda sought to build his edifice of human understanding and solidarity. All other attempts to build on the negation of this foundation are merely building on sands.

Behold Vivekananda, the colossus of the Spirit, as wonderful as his message, rising Everest-like with his head above the clouds and storms of doubts and confusions, with his feet firmly planted in the timeless, his heart spreading over the world like the blue sky, and uttering in deep reverence to the whole of humanity words from his soul:

> 'May I be born again and again, and suffer thousands of miseries, so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum total of all souls.'

Was this a salutation, a bequest, or a prayer? Whatever it might be, on this auspicious occasion of his birth centenary, let us all suck in within our soul, heart, and being, one particle of Vivekananda's dynamic Ātman-consciousness, love for God and men, and nourish it with all love and wisdom. Then whatever life may bring us in from anywhere, at any point of time, we shall be able to face it from that only possible position of true strength, which is Ātman-consciousness.

THE MONASTIC IDEAL AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

By Professor Batuknath Bhattacharya

[Professor Batuknath Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L., formerly of Surendranath College, Calcutta, is a regular contributor to *Prabuddha Bharata*. In this thoughtful article, he powerfully upholds the greatness of the institution of *sannyāsa* in the scheme of Indian life and says how Swami Vivekananda not only lived it gloriously in his own life, but also enriched the institution and enlarged its scope with his valuable contributions to it.]

Fervent faith and fearless spirit were the distinction of Swami Vivekananda among teachers of religion. He was truly the lion of a Vedāntist—the Vedāntakesarī—preaching the Advaita cult to an indifferent and unknowing world with a dauntless courage, born of adamantine conviction and inspired by his Master's unique life of realization. Hence the perfect clarity and outspoken freedom of his utterances on all occasions. These features affiliate him to the Indian tradition of austere and selfless ascetics, as whose luminous representative—the Hindu monk—he burst upon the world synod of faiths at Chicago. Tribute to his personal achievement in the meteoric career of amazing triumphs, starting from 1893, is reverently offered by all who know the marvellous story. But the concept of *sannyāsa*, which he gloriously lived and upheld, claims to be gleaned from his works and rightly appraised. The monastic ideal is glowingly set forth by him, for he was a witness to the spiritual altitudes occupied by the Indian *sādhus* of his day. He was himself a sturdy trunk of the majestic banyan forest which the nineteenth century saw, but with a rare genius of adjustment to the new conditions of the age. In essence, however, his monastic ideal went back to the sages and saints—the *ṛṣis* and Brāhmaṇa anchorites—the misty springs of the mighty stream that had flowed through the ages in Bharata down to his own. Indian history, Swamiji envisaged as the record of an unbroken succession of these uncommon flowers of humanity.

The nineteenth century, generally pictured as the epoch of political strife and up-surge, saw in different parts of India at least a score of these rapt and solemn figures who set nought earth's riches and glories, wholly subdued their fleshy mould, cared as little f death as for life, and exhibited powers of min and will which amazed renowned visitors fro abroad. 'In the Mutiny of 1857', Swami relates, 'there was a Swami whom a Moha medan mutineer severely stabbed. His Hin brethren caught and brought the assail offering to kill him. But the Swami look up at him calmly and said repeatedly "M brother, thou art also He" and expired. Th alone the saintly victim who was vowed t silence could be persuaded to break it in h last breath when a word from him would ha justly punished his slayer.' Swamiji flush with veneration when he spoke of Nag Mah saya, called the flaming fire of East Bengal b Paramahamsadeva—a householder who w more than a *sannyāsin*, a living embodim of humility figuring in Sri Ramakrishn divine drama on earth. Pavhari Baba was towering figure of marvellous power born *bhakti* and *yoga*, whose grace the Sw strove to win for a spell of two months January-April 1886. When for seve nights, however, he saw the luminous visi of his own Master, his mind changed. T adoring terms in which he speaks of the Bab are remarkable, as coming from one of stature and ample spiritual attainments. T Babaji was one of those, he says, who d the greater potentiality of one moment ab another and insist on every moment in e nity being equal to every other and on se the truths of religion face to face, now here, without waiting for death. Religi such as he is no motive to social conduct, an intense search after, and realization of, truth in this life. Once, when bitten by a deadly cobra, he calmly called it 'the messenger from my Beloved' and rid himself of its poison by his Yogic powers. Melting with love and compassion for all and anxious to serve them, he yet offered himself as the last oblation to his sacrificial fire after years of solitary meditation in the underground cell which led to the Gaṅgā. And he was not the only example in that age of uttermost renunciation and self-dedication. A score of such may be marked out from different parts—those who reveal the inner life, the courses of the spirit of this land. Their history, as poet Tagore remarks, though left out of text-books, makes up the vital core of India behind the troubled dream of her political annals.

This inner history of India during the nineteenth century is yet to be familiarized to the public mind. In Swamiji's writings etc., only a few of the great souls appear, but there were others no less eminent, though not so well-known to the outside world. But he had before his eyes the main divisions of the monastic community flourishing in his day—*sannyāsins*, *yogins*, *vairāgins*, and *panthins*. These were respectively the Advaitists of the Śaṅkarācārya orders, the Yogic adepts, the devotees of Rāmānuja and other dualistic sects; and the followers of the liberal reconciling tenets which had sprung up in the unsettled Muslim period. Bhagavandas Babaji of Kalna was an illustrious Vaiṣṇava, visited by Sri Ramakrishna himself. Lokanath Brahmachary, who passed away in the nineties of the last century, was deeply venerated in East Bengal for his severe austerities and occult powers. Prabhu Jagabandhu was a *bhakta* of simple, yet intense faith and of extensive influence all over Bengal and greatly honoured by Mahatma Sisirkumar Ghose and Premananda Bharati. These were luminaries of the spiritual sky who were eagerly sought out by savants and *litterateurs* of the West in their homely resorts. Ramalinga Swami and Sri Thyagaraja were outstanding spiritual figures of the South. There was the renowned trinity at Varanasi—the venerable Trailinga Swami, Bhaskarananda Swami, and Vishuddhananda Swami, in whom Śāstraic lore became living truths. Gambhirnath Yogi, another hallowed name that conjures up deep realization and marvellous powers—the comely self-effacing *sādhu* of Gorakhpur, who chose ever to remain in the background, forewent his master's *gaddi* (seat) and meekly and joyfully served the *de facto mahanta* (head) of his sect. Ramdas Kathia Baba—a free soul of utmost holiness, of perfect bodily and mental control—the master of the self-renounced lawyer Santadas Babaji, Sai Baba of Sirdi in Ahmednagar, a symbol of inter-communal peace and amity, whose inconspicuous lodge in a crumbling old mosque drew visitors like Nana Saheb, Chandavarkar, and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Balananda Brahmachari, a perfect model of austere purity, and Bholananda Giri of unassuming goodness and abounding love are names to which all reverently bow, though in point of publicity, they cannot compare with Maharshi Devendranath, Keshubchandra Brahmananda, Prabhupad Bijaykrishna, Dayananda Saraswati, or Babaji, the Himalayan *yogin* of inscrutable mystery who, through his disciple, Lahiri Mahasaya, inspired Yogananda Swami of the Yogoda Math and Self-Realization Fellowship. All these lives illustrate that one cannot stick to normal life and yet expect superconscious revelation. They prove the basic truth in Swamiji's oft-quoted saying—'Religion is realization, it is a question of fact.' Religion, as a Western thinker remarks, is the thought which turns fearlessly to search for truth at all costs—prepared for any sacrifice. 'It is a silencer of books which talk too much.'

Unfettered freedom and absolute fearlessness are the prizes coveted in the ascetic mode of life. The recluse seeks release from the bonds and shackles of society, from the needs and failings and weaknesses of fleshy nature. *Mukti* or emancipation, which is his aim, is a liberty larger and higher than freedom, as Tagore has remarked. It exceeds the demands of individuality in the free world of today. It is the very opposite of the conformism and regimentation inseparable from modern social behaviour—Eastern or Western. It self-imposes a rule and a way of life of strictest integrity and purity and far removed from the jelly-fish existence which satisfies the majority. It is a strenuous upward striving for the vision of the unseen Reality. If civilization is man's elevation from the life of the senses, its summit is *sannyāsa*—austerity and renunciation—the height of selfless existence.

'Alas! for the irony of fate,' wrote Swamiji in a letter from Ghazipur, in 1890, 'that, in this land of Bhagavān Śuka's birth, renunciation is looked down upon as madness and sin.' And in the *Udbodhan* of March 1898, he explains: 'As the objects of commerce are being brought from one end of the world to another, so, as its natural sequence, the ideas and thoughts of different countries are entering and forcing their way into the very bone and marrow of India. Of these ideas and thoughts, some are really beneficial to her, some are harmful, while others disclose the ignorance and inability of the foreigners to determine what is truly good for the inhabitants of this country.' Has the attitude to *sannyāsa* since then changed, has it become more or rather less appreciative again of the aims and ideals of the Indian monastic life? No better exponent of these in the present age can be imagined than Swami Vivekananda and no fitter occasion to hold them up than the Birth Centenary of one who faced the Western world as the representative of the most ancient Order of monks in the world.

The Indian monastic ideal was a product of the cultural outlook and directly stemmed from the social *milieu* distinctively Indian. Of old, as now, political and social power has been here always subordinated to spiritual and intellectual, says Swamiji. The outburst of national life was round colleges of sages and spiritual teachers. He says on the historical evolution of India: 'I have seen castes in almost every country in the world, but nowhere is their plan and purpose so glorious as here. If caste is thus inevitable, I would rather have a caste of purity and culture and self-sacrifice than a caste of dollars.' The hard core of Indian ethos in Swami Vivekananda, as evinced by these sentiments which are strewn all over his works, was the granite pillar of the majestic human edifice. At a time when an exclusive philosophy of good living and material well-being is being authoritatively inculcated and widely imbibed by the classes and the masses, these utterances may sound a little inane and inapt. But uncompromising was Swamiji's position in this regard. 'Here is the only race where not only poverty does not mean crime, does not mean sin, but poverty has been deified and the beggar's garb is the garb of the highest in the land.' In like accents spoke also Rabindranath: 'Kings and emperors took pride in acknowledging meagrely-clad ascetics as their ancestors.' In 1898, interviewed by *Prabuddha Bharata*, Swamiji declared: 'Our method is very easily described. It simply consists in reasserting the national life. The national ideals of India are renunciation and service. Intensify her in those channels and the rest will take care of itself.' And again: 'The banner of the spiritual cannot be raised too high in this country. In it alone is salvation.' He turns away altogether from the easy compromises and convenient adjustments which irresistibly appeal to frail common flesh and the desire to reap the best of both worlds at the same time. 'How many times I have been asked for a comfortable religion!' says Swamiji, 'Very few men ask for the truth, fewer still care to learn the truth and fewest of all dare to follow it in all its practical bearings. They are used to certain surroundings and have to overcome a huge mass of ancient superstitions, ancestral superstitions, class superstitions, city superstitions, country superstitions, and behind all the vast mass of superstitions that is innate in every human being.' Truth is one thing and comfort is another, he says with emphasis. *Sannyāsa* sets its face against the degradation of the ideal to the actual—against comfortable religion. The clear light of Truth very few in this life can bear, much less live up to. The glory of Indian asceticism has been the translation to life of a very lofty ideal. And Rabindranath tells us that India, from weakness of heart, never made any great truth a mere matter of words, an impossible attainment, incompatible with the conduct of life.

'These man-gods', says Swamiji of the great teachers of the world, 'are the real gods of all nations and all races. Monachism has been the institution in India to maintain this tradition of human divinity. The one great idea that, to me, seems clear and comes through masses of superstition in every country and every religion is the one luminous idea, that man is divine, that divinity is our nature.' The glory of man's Self is nowhere more inspiringly set out than in the pages of his works. That is why we worship incarnations such as Christ or Buddha. 'They are the most perfect manifestations of the Eternal Self. They are much higher than all the conceptions of God that you or I can make.' A perfect man is much higher than such conceptions. Religion, as the oft-quoted sentence of Swamiji runs, is the manifestation of the Divinity already in man. 'Man is the apex', as he says elsewhere, 'of the only world we can ever know.'

Nothing short of the highest in man satisfied the Swami's idea of religion. 'Be a *ṛṣi*', he exhorts, 'that is the secret of power.' He quotes Vātsyāyana: 'He who has attained through proper means the direct realization of Dharma, he alone can be a *ṛṣi*, even if he is a *mleccha* by birth.' In his outlook of limitless liberalism, Ṛṣihood is everyone's destiny, to be a Brāhmaṇa is the goal of man's life. Says he in an address to the *sannyāsins* of Belur Math: 'The aim of this Institution is to make men. You must not merely learn what the *ṛṣis* taught. You must be *ṛṣis* yourselves.' His faith in the ulterior reaches of man's perfection knows no bounds. 'It is my firm conviction', he declares in the discourse 'The Religion We Are Born in', 'that we shall be even greater *ṛṣis* than any that our history presents to us.' And his faith in the infinite perfectibility of man is not a lone sprout of the Indian spiritual sap. It is significant that Sri Aurobindo's vision of the onward spiritual transfiguration of the race and Sri Rabindranath's concept of the human Brahman joined to the Buddhist ideal of Brahmavihāra—abounding love and compassion for all life—bespeak the same dynamic faith, although these latter found expression after the comparatively quieter nineteenth century had passed into the war-torn, blood-stained, inly-convulsed second and later decades of the twentieth century. All three, sprung from the same politically submerged human stock, breathe a new cheer, utter an equally rousing call to mankind.

With Swami Vivekananda, *sannyāsa*, Brāhmaṇahood, *jīvan-mukti*, and Ṛṣihood are different terms for the same exalted condition and signify the apex of man's Godward striving and ascent. All these states convey the highest freedom and fearlessness. 'The only religion that ought to be taught', said he, 'is the religion of fearlessness', and his utterances have invariably the same savour. In lashing at social abuses, in exposing the motives of human conduct, in tracing the evolving ideas of godhead, in assessing the good and evil that diverse creeds have in practice yielded, Swamiji speaks in unfaltering accents of candour and impartiality. His standpoint is serene and detached as of an Alpine beholder who, from snowy heights, surveys the plains below or one of God's spies who scans the affairs of mortals and, in men's garb, observes how they keep the laws of Heaven. When a man has reached that state, he is no longer of the world though still in it. He is called *jīvan-mukta*, 'living free', free even while living, attached to nought on earth.

though moving in it. He is the highest of human beings, nay, of all beings, for he has realized his identity with the Absolute, he has realized that he is one with God. When you have known that you are He, that there is no difference, entirely no difference, that you are all of Him and the whole of Him, all fear ceases. The term *'sannyāsin'* he explained thus in a Boston lecture: 'He makes a complete renunciation (*sannyāsa*) of all worldly position, property, and name, and wanders forth into the world to live a life of self-sacrifice and to seek spiritual knowledge, striving to excel in love and compassion, and to acquire lasting insight.' And again he said elsewhere: 'He should treat the poor with loving care and serve them joyfully with all his might. To pay respects to the rich and hang on them for support has been the bane of all the *sannyāsin* communities of our country.' As Will Durant has remarked, religions are born among the poor and die among the rich. Elsewhere, Swamiji observes: 'India says: Show your power by suffering; the West says: Show your power by doing. The West has solved the problem of how much a man can have; India has solved the problem of how little a man can have.' In a world shrinking under the weight of growing numbers, the Indian ideal of fewer wants may well become, as in modern scientific humanism, the increasing concern of human economy.

The *sannyāsin's* life is a living protest against the obsession of matter which menaces the mental balance of the race. Materialism and all its miseries, said Swamiji, can never be conquered by materialism. Armies, when they attempt to conquer armies, only make brutes of humanity. He seems to have had a prevision of the devastating shocks and eruptions that, since his time, have twice rocked and shattered the fabric of civilization. 'The whole of the Western world is on a volcano which may burst tomorrow, go to pieces tomorrow', he declared. 'What is the meaning of the progress of civilization?' he asks, and answers sarcastically: 'It is the successful accomplishment of the desired object by the justification of wrong means.' So also wrote Rabindranath: 'The moral principle which is valid for the individual is to be laid aside, if necessary, in affairs of state; this rule is becoming increasingly accepted.' Swamiji proclaimed his faith not in the ethics of convenience and the norms of comfortable society, but in the absolute morality of self-conquest and self-realization. 'If matter is powerful, thought is omnipotent', runs his resonant sentence. 'The adamantine wall that shuts us in is egoism. Get rid of this puny I.' All struggles for the preservation of this illusive individuality are really vices. All struggles to lose this individuality are virtues. Perfect morality is the all-in-all of a complete control over mind. The man who is perfectly moral has nothing more to do; he is free. The man who is perfectly moral cannot possibly hurt anything or anybody. No one is more powerful than he who has attained perfect non-injuring. *Sannyāsa* in the Indian concept and practice has ever aimed at this absolute morality to be realized in life on earth.

Sanskrit poetry excels in devotional verses evocative of this sublime ecstatic unitive experience and the 'Song of the Free' and the 'Song of the Sannyāsin' are Swamiji's poems of a matching quality which vividly describe the world-free, all-renouncing wholly emancipated ascetic, intimately conscious of the oneness of all creation.

'From dreams awake, from bonds be free.
Be not afraid—this mystery,
My shadow cannot frighten me!
Know once for all that I am He!'

'Have thou no home! What home can hold thee friend?
The sky thy roof, the grass thy bed, and food.
What chance may bring. ... Like rolling river free

Thou ever be, Sannyāsin bold ! Say—
"Om tat sat Om !"'

Again:
'Wake up the note. The song that had its birth
Far off where worldly taint could never reach,
In mountain caves and glades of forest deep
Whose calm no sigh for lust or wealth or fame
Could ever dare to break, where rolled the stream
Of knowledge, truth, and bliss that follows both,
Sing high that note, Sannyāsin bold ! Say—
"Om tat sat Om !"'

To be confirmed and transfixed in this state of unconditioned ineffable Bliss—this *nirvikalpa samādhi*—to be merged in the waveless depths of meditative trance which, through the ages, has been the strenuous quest and *summum bonum* of the recluse's life in this land was, for long years, the sole aspiration of of Swami Vivekananda. This boon he prayed for from the Mother in the Dakshineshwar temple and for it he eagerly supplicated to his Master. Driven by this master passion, he tramped across the subcontinent and anxiously searched the caves and wooded slopes of the snowy ranges. In this pursuit he was, however, torn by an inner conflict which, soon after his Master's departure, came to an agonizing crisis and the young ochre-robed staff-bearing recluse was at Ghazipur, keen on learning the secret of the unique Yogic powers of Pavhari Baba there. The cyclone raged in his mind, and for twenty-one days, his soul was tossed between devotion to his chosen spiritual guide and the spell of the self-absorbed Vaiṣṇava *yogin* in his lonely cell. On the issue of this tussle hung not merely the shape of his own onward career, the future of the Ramakrishna Order of monks and their mission of service to humanity, but also the fate of the new chapter in world history—the era of cultural understanding and religious harmony. The Swamiji, at last emerged from this struggle, as Jesus had come out of the indecision in the wilderness, as the Buddha had risen from his adamanatine pose under the Bo-tree. He stood on the solid rock of his own realization to proclaim a new monastic cult and code of conduct—the *sannyāsin* to be the friend and servant of mankind and not only the seeker of his own salvation—a combination of the intellect of Śaṅkara and the heart of Gautama, the intensity of the fanatic plus the extensity of the materialist. Conversing in the rented Math premises at Belur in 1898, Swamiji said: 'Everything requires to be changed a little according to time, place, and civilization. On the advent of Sri Ramakrishna, a new current has set in in thought and language. Men who are truly wise commit themselves to the mercy of that particular sect through which the current of life flows.' He says elsewhere: 'The old modes of *sannyāsins* are breaking, yielding place to a new mould by degrees.' 'I wish I had one infinitesimal part of Buddha's heart', he says in a short discourse on his life. 'Compare', he says again, 'the great teachers of religion with the great philosophers. In the latter, we touch the intellect, in the former we touch life. How can we explain this mysterious personality? The man who influences, who throws his magic, as it were, upon his fellow beings is a dynamo of power. Make yourself a dynamo. Feel first for the world. At a time when all the world is ready to work, where is the man of feeling? Where is the feeling that produced an Ignatius of Loyala?' It was Swamiji's dream to mint the mine of spirituality he had seen in his Master into coins of men of gold—the dynamos of feeling, the dynamos of power, to galvanize into new life the tradition of ascetic genius in the country—to mould it into a spirit of service joined to renunciation. Asceticism is decribed in the Śāstras as either impulsive or short-lived (*markaṭa*), adopted on death-bed (*ātura*), inspired by intense yearning for self-knowledge (*vividiṣā*), or prompted by an inborn and irrevocable, all-forsaking urge (*vidvat*). The uniform motive in all these varieties is personal redemption. Swami Vivekananda reoriented the outlook by his motto: '*Ātmano mokṣārthaṁ jagaddhitāya ca*'—for the liberation of self and doing good to humanity. It is the synthesis of individual realization and social regeneration—Vedāntic Brahma-jñāna, fused with Buddhist Brahma-vihāra—the unitive consciousness merging in love, spread in widest commonalty, the bliss of making all men happy.

Under this inspiration, the Ramakrishna Order of monks stood forth as pioneers in relief works, organizers of hospitals and sanatoria, founders of schools, colleges, and *catuṣpāṭhis*, and technological institutes, halls of cultural exchange, and temples of humanities—nobly conceived and superbly executed. The Mission stands today as a synonym for well-tried method, impeccable integrity, disinterested work, self-forgetting care for the glory of the Master, assured success in whatever project it launches. Its field of labour ever expands, resources and materials inevitably pour in on all hands. It seems to have taken its cue from Swamiji's sage counsel: 'The one thing necessary is to be stripped of our vanities—the sense that we possess any spiritual wisdom and to surrender ourselves to the guidance of our *guru*. Truth will never come into our minds so long as there will remain the faintest shadow of *ahaṅkāra*. Complete self-surrender is the only way to spiritual illumination.' The resulting marvels of organization and practical genius, of missionary zeal and secular well-being are the first fruits of the prophetic vision and unerring insight into the seeds of Time—those that would sprout and those that would wither—which proves the world teacher. Says Swamiji: 'Many may become *mukta* (liberated). The whole world seems like a dream to the liberated, but the *ācārya* must have the knowledge that the world is true, or else why should he teach? Again, if he has not realized the world as a dream, then he is no better than an ordinary man, and could he teach?' In Swami Vivekana this concept of a world teacher became and he showed in practice and taught all this antinomy of a world, at once real dream-like, and the webs of fancy he wo of a world regenerate and an India rebo are proving substantial on the loom of T Politics he shunned and disclaimed for sake of something deeper and more endu and history records that many who espo politics as the means of Indian libera kindled the fire in their souls at the sa flames of *tapasyā* or austerity that the S relit from the undying embers of In *sannyāsa*. He, however, had no illu about political rights and material p perity—machines and mansions, the trapp of power, and gadgets of comfort and lu As a true son of the Orient, he rated t aright as 'the Golgotha of wealth and p and splendour'—the dazzling shows th off by man's soul-force bent on the obj of desire, the fleeting shadows cast on silver screen of eternity by the power of Spirit, within which is the abiding Reality

Indian independence is an historic ev the full import of which is yet to be ri gauged. It is a challenge and an oppo nity—a challenge to the human resources rise to the ample stature of Indian manh and an opportunity almost unique realize the audacious dreams that had n and fortified the nation in the struggle freedom. Among the daring visionaries outlined the ground-plan of renascent In none has a higher claim to grateful ho than Swamiji—'the best of men' by household name and 'the bliss of discri tion' by his monastic name. To regen the core of manhood and to rekindle the old spiritual flame were alike his obje and between the two, he saw an inevi link. Throughout the history of India says on the course of its evolution, a so upheaval is almost always succeeded b political unity which, in its turn, help strengthen the spiritual aspiration that brings it to being. This nexus between the nation's inner life and outer achievement was stressed by all outstanding leaders of thought and political activity during the century of ferment closing with freedom. It is usual to highlight the successive stages of the struggle, the tussle of power between the rulers and the ruled, the repression and sufferings of the men of the highest mettle. The crown of their glory and the halo of their martyrdom are memories never to fade from the pages of history. But the purity of their impulses and purposes and their unyielding patriotic resolves had more than the usual zeal of freedom fighters. It is notable that the war of liberation in India, in its inspiration and progress, had a religious complexion. The adoration of the Motherland as Divinity, the adoptation of the *Gītā* as the gospel of life, the appraisal of India's cultural heritage as a treasure for all time, the touch with *sādhus*, and the ideals of austerity and renunciation which moulded many of the heroic fighters prove this other than wholly secular urge behind their self-sacrifice. The nineteenth century was, indeed, a period of more than political resurgence. As the leviathan roused itself after centuries of slumber and stupor, the socio-religious stir was no less remarkable. For nearly ten centuries, the movements that had shaken the community aimed either at strengthening orthodoxy or expanding the social fold, more or less regional in character and wholly spiritual in appeal. They were all alike deferential to scriptural authority and a liberal interpretation was the sole instrument of change and reform. These features persisted down the centuries, but the new era demanded a wider scope, a larger freedom, a more comprehensive world-view, an unfettered personal dynamism. In Swami Vivekananda, these new urges found a voice that rumbled like rolling thunder and filled the farthest skies.

India, now independent and making big strides towards the Western standard of civilization, sounds a twofold call to her sons and daughters. Will they be content simply to reproduce the performances of their new exemplars—to exploit the wealth in the earth's bowels and to cover the surface with the fabrics of industry and engineering, averting their faces from the eternal springs, the golden fountain from which all earthly possessions have flowed; or will they care to listen to her special message—the message of the Spirit, sounded by the seers and the saints, the sages and the *sannyāsins*, in an unbroken series through the long corridor of measureless time—the message of the most ancient order of monks in the world that Swami Vivekananda represented at the Parliament of Religions?

As for Swamiji, he is our crest-jewel. We do not care a fig even to lay down our lives for his sake. We shall feel thankful if we can but serve him even with our heart's blood. How can you ever understand what Swamiji is? ... Swamiji was a seer with a distant vision. He knew what would happen in the future, and therefore formulated these rules for the guidance of the Order. The more we discuss his words and try to practise them in life, the better for us.

Swami Shivananda

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S VISITS TO ALMORA

By Mrs. Gertrude Emerson Sen

[Mrs. Gertrude E. Sen, who is a well-known writer and author of many valuable books, is living in Almora, and is a very close friend of the Ramakrishna Ashrama there. This illuminating article picturesquely describes the three visits of Swami Vivekananda to that hill station, which is so dear to all connected with the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement.]

From the *Letters* and *Life* of Swami Vivekananda, this account of his three visits to Almora—in 1890, 1897, and 1898—has been pieced together. Almora is a small Himalayan town (present population about 16,000), in the northern part of Uttar Pradesh. It is one of the jumping-off places for pilgrimages to the sacred shrines of Kedarnath and Badrinarayan, and to Mount Kailas, sacred to Śiva, in Tibet. The town itself, which lies at an altitude of just over 5,000 ft., was founded in 1592 as the capital of the Chand Rājās, then ruling this region. Later on, it was conquered by Nepal, but reconquered by the British in 1815. Many of the old houses of Almora have upper storeys finely carved in the Nepalese tradition. The bazar, a single long street paved with stones, which runs along the rest of the ridge for about two miles with houses spilling down on both sides, has been cited as one of the best and most picturesque of the old hill bazars in India.

The surrounding hills and ridges are covered with deodars and pines. The annual rainfall is only some 45 to 50 inches, so that, compared with other hill stations of the western Himalayas such as Naini Tal, Ranikhet, Simla, or Mussoorie, or Darjeeling at the other end of the Himalayan chain, Almora is 'dry'. In fact, it has an almost ideal climate, not too cold in winter, not too hot in summer, not too wet in the rainy season. Apart from its healthful climate, there is the magnificent view to the north of some twenty or more great snow peaks, including Kamet, Nanda Devi, and Trisul—all over twenty thousand feet high and stretching in a jagged line right up to the border of Tibet, ninety miles away.

After the passing of Sri Ramakrishna, in 1886, the young monks of the Baranag monastery soon scattered in all direct eager to practise *sādhanā* in some remote lonely spot, or to go on pilgrimages to holy places. One of them, Akhandana spent three years wandering in the Himala and Tibet, and he was the first of Ra krishna's disciples to visit Almora, where received hospitable treatment from Lala B Shah, a leading citizen of the town. T gentleman was a true devotee, and afterw showed extraordinary courtesy to all Swamis of the Ramakrishna Math Mission, many of whom, in later years, star from here on pilgrimages to the holy pl or remained in Almora for a time as guests.

Like the others, Vivekananda, or Na (Narendra) as he was then known, longed to become a wanderer, to seek some hidden retreat in the Himalayas, wh he could plunge into deep meditation. left Calcutta in 1888, and got as far as Ri kesh, from where he intended to proceed Badrinath; but his first disciple, Sadana who was then with him and whom he just initiated at Hathras, suddenly feel ill, the plan had to be abandoned. Inste they returned to Hathras, from where Viv nanda was then called back to Baranagore his brother monks. He remained at Ba nagore practically the whole of the next y confronted with many difficulties and sponsibilities, but his mind was restless, letters from Akhandananda, still wander about in the Himalayas, made him long more fervently to shake himself free follow a life of uninterrupted meditat There must have been a plan at one during this year for him to join Akhandananda somewhere in the Himalayas and proceed to Tibet. An unpublished letter from Akhandananda (Gangadhar) to Badri Shah in Almora, written from Badrinath and dated June 19, 1889, refers to the expected arrival in Almora of Vivekananda, referred to simply as a 'brother monk'.

> Badrinath,
> 19th June, '89
>
> My dear Badri Shah,
>
> A *gurubhāi* of mine is proceeding to Almora. Please receive him warmly and try to accommodate him in a comfortable place and help him in every way so that he may not feel the least trouble during his sojourn at Almora. He is one of my advanced *gurubhāis,* a highly educated gentleman leading a perfect ascetic life since ten or twelve years. He has sacrificed all his worldly prosperities for the sake of Almighty. Now he is in the stage of Paramahamsa. He will start tomorrow. I am doing all right; most likely, I will be starting for Lhasa in the coming month. ...
>
> Your well wisher,
> Bengali Ganga Dhar
> or
> Who returned from Tibet
> Babajeė.

Vivekananda did not, at this time, go to Almora after all. Once more fate intervened. On the very day he was planning to leave Calcutta, the disciple Sadananda, who had taken months to recover from the illness he had contracted in Rishikesh, unexpectedly arrived to join the Baranagore monastery. The departure had to be postponed, but the idea was never given up.

Early in 1890, Vivekananda started out again, stopping off in Ghazipur to see Pavhari Baba, a saint living in an underground cave surrounded by a high wall, from whom he hoped to learn something about *rāja-yoga.* From Ghazipur, he wrote to Akhandananda, requesting him to come down to the plains immediately, so that the two might make preparations to depart for Nepal, Tibet, and possibly, China. But the illness of a brother monk took him to Varanasi, and there he had news of the death of Balaram Bose, the great householder disciple of Ramakrishna, and returned to Calcutta. Finally, on July 6, he wrote to two of the brothers already in Almora, Saradananda and Vaikunthanath: 'I intend shortly, as soon as I can get a portion of my fare, to go up to Almora, and thence to some place in Garhwal on the Gaṅgā where I can settle down for a long meditation. Gangadhar is accompanying me. ... This time I shall not go to Pavhari Baba or any other saint—they divert one from one's highest purpose. Straight up!' Before leaving, he told his *gurubhāis*: 'I shall not return until I acquire such realization that my very touch will transform a man.'

Today, a fine motor road brings the traveller from Kathgodam, the railway terminus at the foot of the hills, to Almora within a few hours. In 1890, travellers had to come by horse back, palanquin, or on foot, along a rough bridle-path. Vivekananda, accompanied by Akhandananda, set out, carrying only staff and *kamaṇḍalu* (waterpot used by *sādhus*). From Kathgodam, they walked on to Naini Tal, and after spending a few days there, set out for Almora, begging their food along the way. On the third day, they reached a place called Kakrighat, on the Kosi River. 'What a delightful spot for meditation!' Vivekananda remarked, sitting down under a great peepul-tree. Almost immediately, his body became stiff and motionless, as if all the life had gone out of it, and for a long time, he remained in that state. On returning to normal consciousness, he exclaimed: 'Oh, Gangadhar, I have just passed through one of the greatest moments of my life. I have found the oneness between the macrocosm and the microcosm. I have seen the whole universe within an atom!' Overwhelmed by this experience, he could think and talk of nothing else as they continued on their way to Almora.

When they were climbing the last steep

slope leading to the town, having had nothing to eat all day, Vivekananda suddenly sank down, almost fainting in sheer exhaustion, opposite a small Muslim graveyard. Akhandananda went off in search of water. Meanwhile, the fakir in charge of the cemetery, Zulfikar Ali by name, seeing his plight, offered Vivekananda a cucumber. Too tired even to lift his hand, Vivekananda asked the man to put it in his mouth! When the latter held back, saying that he was a Mussulman, Vivekananda characteristically replied: 'What does that matter? Are we not all brothers?'

This story was to have an unexpected sequel. Seven years later, on his next visit to Almora in 1897, no longer as an unknown, starving *sannyāsin*, but as the world-famous Swami Vivekananda, he was met on the way and conducted in a big procession to the town. Suddenly, he caught sight of that same Muslim fakir in the crowd and stopped to thank him publicly for his former service. 'The man really saved my life. Never had I felt so exhausted', Vivekananda explained.

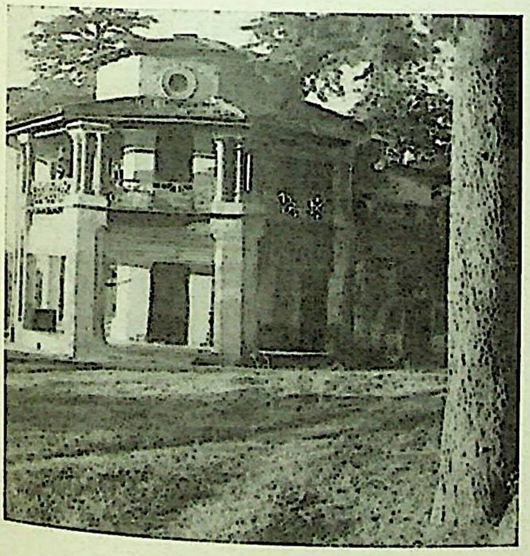
It was in late August or September 1890 that Vivekananda first arrived in Almora. There he and Akhandananda joined the two monks, already staying as guests of Badri Shah. While he was staying at the house of Badri Shah, a curious incident happened. A man became 'possessed', and Badri Shah was asked to come and see him. Vivekananda went along, and the crowd, seeing his ochre cloth, begged him to cure the sick man. 'Who am I, my brothers?' he said. 'I am only a *sannyāsin*. The Lord will take care of him.' Yet since he was pressed to do so, he laid his hand on the head of the sick man tossing in a frenzy and frothing at the mouth. Almost instantly he grew quiet and, in a short time, became quite normal again.

After remaining a few days with his kind host, Vivekananda felt an irresistible urge to be alone, to plunge into that deep meditation for which his soul thirsted. He walked out to a solitary cave overhanging a small mountain village. The exact location of this cave has never been determined, since there are several answering its general description around Almora, but very possibly, it was a large well-known cave on Kasar Devi, a forested spur five miles to the north-east of Almora town. This cave now has a built-up entrance to make it into a sort of hermitage for *sādhus*. In the cave, Vivekananda then practised an intense *sādhanā*, determined to reach that ultimate realization which he held to be the goal of his life.

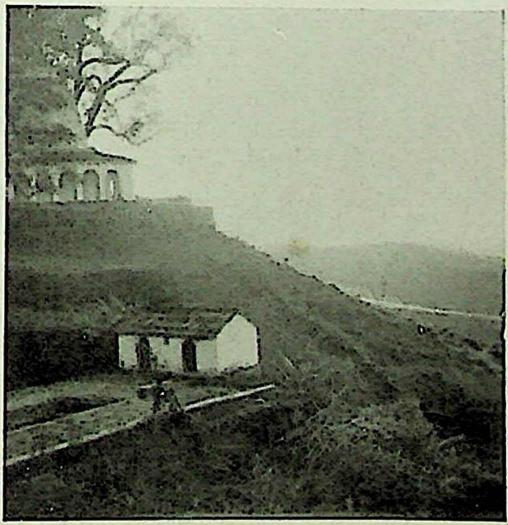
In the first edition of *The Life of the Swami Vivekananda,* written by his Eastern and Western disciples, a remarkable account of his experience in the cave is given, which is strangely omitted from later editions. 'Here in that cave, overhanging a mountain-village', the account reads, 'he practised austerities day and night. He determined to find Truth. And there in the silence, with not even a single soul to disturb his meditation, he had experience after experience in the way of illumination, until his face shone with a celestial fire. And then, at the very climax of all his spiritual exercises, instead of abiding in the ultimatum of personal bliss which he expected to do, he felt the impetus to work, and this seemed to force him out, as it were, from his *sādhanā*.'

This was, indeed, a strange time for him. The monk Akhandananda has spoken of it thus: 'It seemed as if every time the Swami desired to retire into the life of silence and pure monasticism, he was compelled to give it up by the pressure of circumstance. He had a Mission to fulfil, and the very essence of his nature would force him into the realization of this line of work.' He himself, referring to his strange experience in the cave, said later: 'Nothing in my whole life ever so filled me with the sense of work to be done. It was as if I were *thrown out* from that life of solitude, to wander to and fro in the plains below.' And so he came back again to his brother disciples and his host in Almora. There he found a telegram awaiting him.

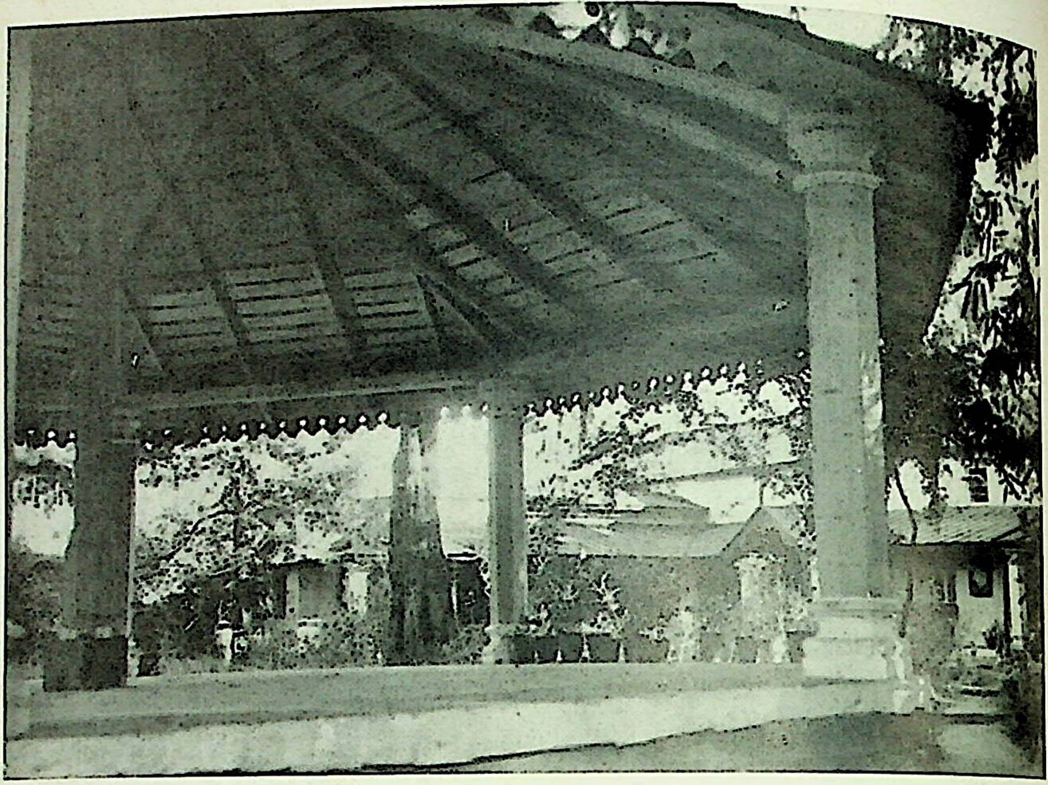
SNOW VIEW FROM ALMORA



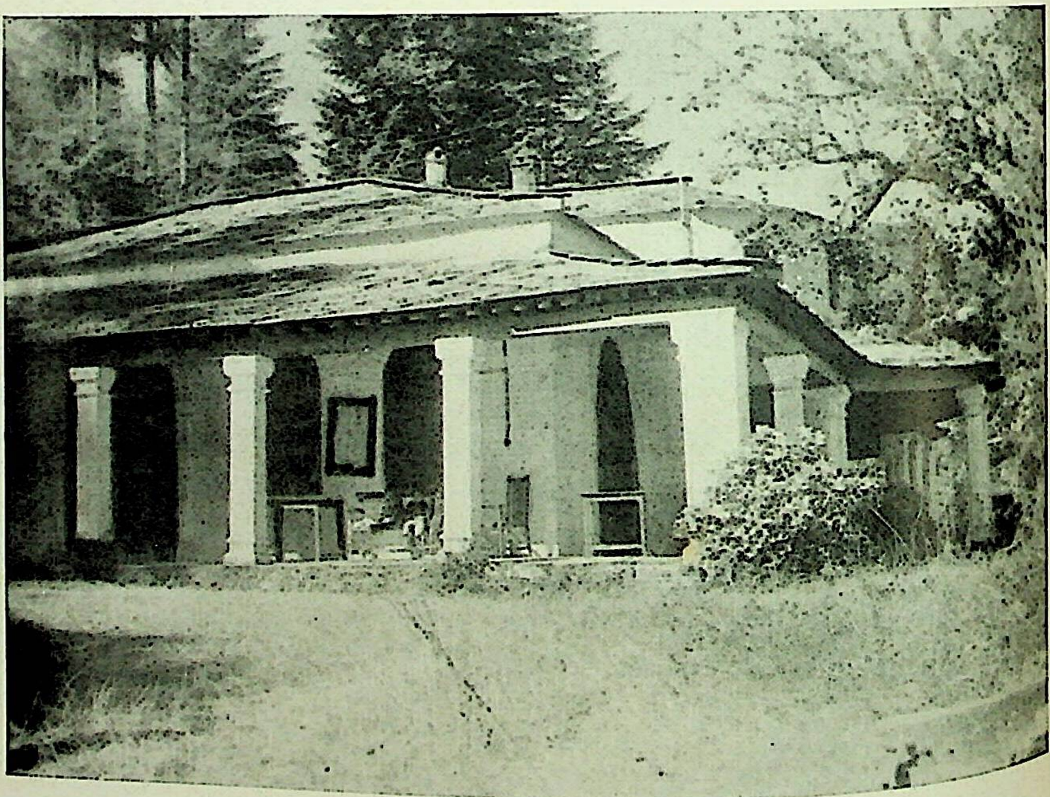
AMBA DUTT'S GARDEN HOUSE
ALMORA
(where Swamiji stayed in 1890)



KASAR DEVI
A forested spur, five miles from Almora
(See page 274)



ENGLISH CLUB, ALMORA
(where Swamiji gave his lecture on 'Vedic Teaching in Theory and Practice' in 1897)



THOMPSON HOUSE, ALMORA
Temporary Home of Prabuddha Bharata from August 1898 to March 1899
(See pages 276 and 277)

announcing the suicide of his widowed sister, and a letter soon followed with all the harrowing details. He suffered a great shock, and then and there, was rudely awakened to some of the special problems confronting Hindu women, particularly widows, and he made up his mind to fight their cause in the face of orthodox tradition.

The four monks now decided to continue on their way to Badrinath. They had travelled on foot some 120 miles when the illness of one, and then another, compelled them to abandon the idea of their pilgrimage. It was already intensely cold, with winter approaching. They made their way down to Rishikesh, beloved of *sādhus,* where the Gaṅgā enters the plains of India. A little later, at Meerut, Vivekananda suddenly decided to separate from his brothers. He must go alone, seeking to understand this India he now knew he had been born to serve. For the next two and a half years he wandered on, now and then encountering, by chance, some *gurubhāi* at an out-of-the-way place or passing one at a railway station. Then he completely disappeared. Somehow, in Madras, he had heard of a forthcoming Parliament of Religions to be held at Chicago in 1893, and young men of Madras raised the money to pay for his passage to the United States. Only the Holy Mother was told of his new plan, and she gave him her blessings. When next heard of, he had become the famous Swami Vivekananda who had taken the Parliament of Religions by storm.

Vivekananda returned from America and Europe in January 1897. With him came J. J. Goodwin, an English disciple and expert court stenographer, whom he had first met in New York, and an English couple, Captain and Mrs. Sevier, who had become his warm followers in London and were coming to India to help found an Advaita Ashrama in the Himalayas—a dream Vivekananda had first spoken about to them in Switzerland. The strenuous work of lecturing and holding classes abroad, undertaken with the combined hope of raising funds for starving India and spreading the message of Vedānta in the West, had had its effect on his health. The tumultuous welcome he received on his homecoming, in Ceylon and Madras, right up to Calcutta—the vast crowds, the processions, the public addresses, the innumerable interviews—added to his exhaustion. He wanted to fly to Almora for rest, but he felt that two major tasks awaited him in Bengal. The first was to organize the Ramakrishna Mission, for service to the poor, the down-trodden, and the needy among his countrymen, and the second was to plan immediate voluntary relief work by the monks in the famine, then sweeping several districts of Bengal. His fiery command to his brother monks and disciples was to forget their own salvation for the sake of others. Finally, in early May 1897, he left Calcutta, on the doctor's insistence, for Almora. Some of his *gurubhāis* and disciples also went with him. Goodwin and another English follower, Miss Müller, had already preceded him.

This time, Goodwin and other admirers went all the way down to Kathgodam to receive him. As the party was approaching the town by the old bridle-path, they were met on the way by a large crowd, and Vivekananda was made to mount a gaily decorated horse. The triumphant procession proceeded to the bazar, where three thousand people were waiting to give him a public welcome. All along the way, women gathered on the roof-tops, showered him with flowers and auspicious rice. Decorative awnings were strung across the street in front of Badri Shah's house, to form a *pandāl,* and all the houses were lighted up as if for a festival.

Two addresses in English and one in Sanskrit were read out, and to these, in view of the lateness of the hour, Vivekananda made a brief but moving reply, in English. He referred to the Himalayas as the land of their forefathers' dreams, 'the holy land where every ardent soul in India wants to come at the end of his life, to close the last chapter of his mortal career here'. And he went on: 'This is the land which, since my very boyhood, I have been dreaming of. ... I have attempted again and again to live here for ever, and although the time was not ripe, and I had work to do and was whirled away outside of this holy place, ... yet I sincerely pray and hope, and almost believe, my last days will be here, of all places on earth. ... These Himalayas stand for renunciation, and as our forefathers used to be attracted to it in the latter days of their life, so strong souls from all quarters of this earth, in time to come, will be attracted to this father of mountains, when all this fight between sects, and all these differences in dogmas, will not be remembered any more and quarrels between your religion and my religion will have vanished altogether, when mankind will understand that there is but one eternal religion, and that is the perception of the Divine within, and the rest is mere froth. Such ardent souls will come here, knowing that the world is but vanity of vanities, knowing that everything is useless except the worship of the Lord and the Lord alone. ... These mountains are associated with the best memories of our race. Here, therefore, must be one of those centres, not merely of activity, but more of calmness, of meditation, and of peace, and I hope some day to realize it.'

This time Vivekananda remained in Almora two and half months, again as the guest of his old friend Badri Shah. Yet, sometimes, he felt that even Almora was not far enough away, not quiet enough. Twice he retreated to Dewaldhar, an estate some twenty miles to the north. There he rode horseback and enjoyed the delightful climate and magnificent scenery, especially the sunrise over the mighty snow peaks. Gradually his health improved, and he wrote to his doctor in Calcutta that he had not felt so well since he was a boy. Miss Müller, who undertook to feed him 'three square meals a day, European-style', no doubt, helped to hasten his recovery. But he would not give himself a longer rest than was absolutely necessary. By the end of July, he was ready to leave Almora.

Before he left, the English residents of the station invited him to give a lecture at the English Club. He chose for his subject the different approaches of West and East in the search for a solution of the vital question confronting the soul—the Western method which seeks for a solution in the outside world, the Eastern method, which, finding no answer in nature, turns its enquiry within. He also gave two lectures at the Almora inter-College. Here, in response to the public request, he gave his first talk in Hindi, his subject being 'Vedic Teaching in Theory and Practice'.

The third visit of Vivekananda to Almora took place the following year. By this time more of his foreign disciples had followed him to India. Nivedita (Miss Margaret Noble) arrived at Calcutta, from England, in January 1898, and Mrs. Ole Bull and Miss Josephine MacLeod from America, in February. Captain and Mrs. Sevier, as the heat of the plains increased, left for Almora, where they rented a large house, then known as 'Thompson House' and belonging to Badri Shah, at the western end of the ridge. They were still concerned with the question of finding a suitable location for the proposed Advaita Ashrama. Vivekananda was urged to come and stay with them as their guest, and fearing that the newly arrived Westerners would fall ill during the burning heat of the advancing summer, Vivekananda and the rest left Calcutta for Almora on May 11, 1898. The party included Nivedita, Mrs. Ole Bull, Miss MacLeod, Mrs. Patterson, wife of the American Consul-General in Calcutta, who had met and befriended Vivekananda in the early days in America, two of his brother monks, Niranjanananda and Turiyananda, and two of his personal disciples, Sadananda and Swarupananda When they all reached Almora, Vivekananda and the monks became the guests of Captain and Mrs. Sevier at

'Thompson House', while the Western friends and Nivedita, now an initiated disciple, lived at 'Oakley House'.

The weeks that followed must have been almost a repetition of the wonderful days of Thousand Island Park on the St. Lawrence, back in the summer of 1895, when there gathered around him an ardent little group of seekers, one of whom, afterwards known as Sister Christine, became a life-long disciple and devoted the rest of her life to serving India. Vivekananda set himself the task of training these Western followers, of breaking down instinctive prejudices, of explaining strange Indian customs, myths, symbols, history. Every morning, after an early walk with the monks, he went on to 'Oakley House' for breakfast, and spent several hours in vivid talks ranging over an infinite variety of subjects. Sister Nivedita has left an inspiring account of these talks in her little book entitled *'Notes of Some Wanderings with the Swami Vivekananda'*. There were, also, discussions and interviews with many who came to see him. One day Mrs. Annie Besant, then leader of the Theosophical Movement in India, was entertained at tea at 'Thompson House'. On another occasion, a saintly Bengali patriot, Aswini Datta, who had met Vivekananda years ago as 'Narendra', saw him out riding horseback and followed him back to his door. In the ensuing conversation, Vivekananda made clear his own idea of how India's salvation was to be attained. 'Do you think merely passing a few resolutions will bring freedom?' he thundered. 'I have no faith in that. The masses must be awakened first. Let them have full meals, and they will work out their own salvation.'

Now and then, he was again overwhelmed by the old mood to be utterly alone. On one such occasion, he departed for Shya Devi, a forested peak some miles west of Almora. Here he remained for three days. When he returned—because even there people hunted him out to ask questions—he had at least made one worth-while discovery. He was still, he claimed, 'the old-time *sannyāsin,* able to go barefoot and endure heat or cold and scanty fare, unspoilt by the West'. Back in Almora, however, a new shock awaited him. A wire brought news of the death of the faithful Goodwin in Ootacamund, in South India. When the telegram announcing Goodwin's death was handed to him, he stood in front of 'Thompson House', according to Miss MacLeod, gazing off to the distant snow peaks in absolute silence for a long time. Then he remarked very quietly: 'The days of my public utterance are over.' That night he composed a poem, 'Requiescat in Pace', which he sent to Goodwin's mother, and in feeling words, he paid tribute to his friend and disciple. 'The debt of gratitude I owe him can never be repaid, and those who think they have been helped by any thought of mine ought to know that almost every word of it was published through the untiring and most unselfish exertions of Mr. Goodwin.'

Once more, the time had come to move on, and Vivekananda decided to proceed to Kashmir with the Western disciples. Before they left Almora—Vivekananda for the last time—on June 11, 1898, an important step was taken. The editor of *Prabuddha Bharata* or 'Awakened India', the English journal originally started in Madras, had suddenly died, and it was decided to restart the journal in Almora. The young disciple Swami Swarupananda became its new editor, Captain Sevier offered to pay all the expenses for bringing up a hand-press, paper, etc., and to act as manager, and until the publication centre was finally removed in March 1899, to Mayavati, fifty-five miles from Almora—the site ultimately selected by the Seviers and Swarupananda for the Advaita Ashrama in the Himalayas—the journal continued to be brought out from Almora.

The three visits of Swami Vivekananda, and the many more from monks of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in years to follow, have made Almora a place of special significance for the followers of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, both of East and West. On the steep western end of the ridge on which the town itself is built, perches the Ashrama (familiarly known as the Ramakrishna Kutir), founded by Swami Turiyananda in 1916. It has grown to comprise several buildings, and anything from five monks in winter to twenty or more in the hot weather, may be found in residence here. The Ashrama is a living symbol of the place of retreat and meditation that Vivekananda loved. Not far off is also the Vivekananda Laboratory, organized to carry on fundamental research work in plant physiology and agriculture by my husband Boshi Sen, a disciple of Vivekananda's first disciple Sadananda. In between the two still stands 'Thompson House', now belonging to a new owner and renamed 'The Avocado', almost exactly as the old house stood when Vivekananda lived there sixty-five years ago.

In Swamiji's presence, the whole mind would remain absorbed in him alone; while talking with him, one would perforce do so with the fullest attention. His words were wonderful, and so were his actions. One never knows where to stop, when one starts talking about him. I never came across any other versatile genius like him. His foresight was all-comprehensive. His ideas and his expressions would lift one up to a very high plane. I never found such bliss and happiness in any one else's company or talk as in his. One can never forget that experience, nor express it in words. His words were as divine command to us. And we loved him so much that any separation from him caused the greatest pain. Although I missed his company during the last two or three years of his life, the thought that he is really not dead but still alive would fill me with hope that one day I shall meet him again and talk to him. When the news of his passing away reached me, I was greatly shocked. I always felt that his words and actions were not of this world. Swamiji told me: 'Haribhai, whatever I have done is the Master's work, it is the Mother's work. He forcibly got it done through me. I had planned to do this and that, but, finally, I could do only what he willed. These are not Vivekananda's achievement, these are just what he forced him to do. I was merely a tool in his hand, and had simply to obey his command. Even though I wished my plans to prevail, I never succeeded. But I am happy at what has been achieved; and I am happy, too, after retiring from work. Whatever you are doing is also his works. Let things go on thus for the present!'

SWAMI TURIYANANDA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND NATIONAL AWAKENING

BY PROFESSOR SUDHANSU BIMAL MOOKHERJI

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The nineteenth century was the seed-time of modern India in a very real sense. It witnessed the birth of a number of spiritual and intellectual giants, who breathed new life into the dry bones of our motherland. They helped not a little to place India on the map of the modern world. Each of them, in his own way, lent a hand in preparing the ground for the regeneration and ultimate liberation of India, tied to the apron strings of alien rule for centuries. The cumulative effect of their work is being felt even today, decades after they have passed away. The builders of the Indian nation of today are the blessed ones, who have added their 'bundle(s) to the granary of human spirit' and said their 'word(s) in civilization'.

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) is one of the towering figures in this galaxy of stalwarts. The times when he came, as every student of modern Indian history knows, were one of the darkest periods in the centuries-old annals of the country. Inferiority complex and slave mentality of the Indians, coupled with their loss of respect for their own cultural heritage and traditions, had created a tragic situation. There was a vacuum in the national mind. Old ideas and old values had been discarded; but their place had not been taken by new ones. The younger generation was straining every nerve to become an 'imitation of Englishmen'. Left to itself, it would have made India a pale copy of England in the long run. The older generation, for the most part, took cover behind the wall of orthodoxy and sought to bolster it up by a thousand and one childish devices. The Christian missionaries, among others, reaped a rich harvest and converted thousands, mostly Hindus, to Christianity. The wailings of a nation's soul, incarcerated like Prometheus, had already begun to be heard.

Reaction against this sad state of affairs had already set in during the middle of the nineteenth century. The first faint murmurings of a new life were already audible. The life-work of Raja Rammohan Roy and Swami Dayananda Saraswati and others had reawakened the country. But it fell to the lot of Swami Vivekananda, the chosen one of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, the man-God of Dakshineswar, to carry the work farther and set the stage for the liberation of the nation later on under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.

Versatility is not unoften the sign of greatness, and a really great man is often a versatile man as well. So also was Swami Vivekananda. He was an inspired religious teacher, one who had realized God and felt His living presence in all places and in all beings; a superb orator, whose words, spoken from the depths of his heart, made a never-to-be-forgotten impression on his audience; a great thinker, one of the most erudite scholars of his times, an indefatigable worker and organizer, a polyglot, an apostle of humanitarianism to whom the poor were 'Daridra Nārāyaṇas' (God in the guise of the poor) and their service was the best worship of God. He was all these rolled into one.

But posterity will, perhaps, remember the Swami longest as a patriot. He has been rightly described as the 'Patriot-Saint' of modern India. His great 'Periplus' for two years (1891-93) and his subsequent wanderings round the world (1893-96) revealed to him 'the tragic face of the present day, the God struggling in humanity, the cry of the people of India and of the world for help, and the heroic duty of the new Oedipus, whose task it was to deliver Thebes from the talons of the Sphinx or to perish with Thebes'.

The endless miseries he saw around him during his perigrinations through India 'was to be the flint upon the steel whence a spark would fly to set the whole soul on fire'. 'And with this as the foundation-stone, pride, ambition, and love, faith, science, and action, all his powers and all his desires were thrown into the mission of human service and into one single flame.' The flame was that of practical Vedānta. The first-hand experience of his country's poverty and degradation watered the seeds of patriotism and humanitarianism in Vivekananda and germinated them. Patriotism and humanitarianism became his passion, to be sublimated finally into a religion. But it was a religion with a difference. Religion, the Swami declared, is no religion, unless it gives us faith in ourselves, unless it restores our national self-respect, and unless it gives us 'the power to feed the poor and relieve the misery around' us. He declared further that God-realization is to be achieved through the service of afflicted humanity. He saw his God in man. *'Nara'* or man and *'gaṇā'* or the masses were to him 'Nārāyaṇa' or the Lord Himself in flesh and blood.

The Master (Ramakrishna Paramahamsa) was no false prophet. Had he not declared years ago that the day his beloved Naren came 'in contact with suffering and misery, the pride of his character will melt into a mood of infinite compassion'?

None knew better than Vivekananda that political bondage was the root cause of a thousand evils and one. He, therefore, declared openly—it needed not a little courage in the late nineteenth century India—'India's first duty is to secure her freedom as a condition precedent to her social well-being' (quoted by Hans Kohn in *History of Nationalism in the East*, p. 373). He declared unequivocally that, if he was a lover of God, he was no less a lover of his country and countrymen as well. His patriotism, like all genuine patriotism, found expression in his profound love for the down-trodden people of his country, reduced to almost sub-human level through centuries-old oppression, injustice, and exploitation—social, political, and economic. Commisseration with and fellow-feeling for one's own countrymen and women were, in his opinion, the first lessons to be learnt by a patriot. Sincere patriotism, he rightly held, is an all-absorbing passion. It makes the patriot indifferent to everything but the well-being of his country and countrymen. He declared in the course of a speech: 'For the next fifty years this alone shall be our key-note, this our great Mother India. Let all other vain gods disappear for that time from our minds. This is the only God that is awake, our own race, everywhere His hands, everywhere His feet, everywhere His ears, He covers everything. All other Gods are sleeping. What vain Gods shall we go after and yet cannot worship the God that we see all around us, the Virāṭ? . . . The first Gods we have to worship are our own countrymen. These we have to worship, instead of being jealous of each other and fighting each other. It is most terrible *karma* for which we are suffering and yet it does not open our eyes!'

Vivekananda was convinced that study of holy books and meditation might wait. But the service of the suffering humanity could not. The idea of personal *mukti* or liberation was to be shelved for the time being. The first duty of Indians was the regeneration of India, the resurrection of her spiritual powers and their diffusion throughout the world for the happiness and well-being of humanity at large.

The Swami realized his oneness with all Indians—from the prince to the pariah. Every bit of Indian soil, every particle of Indian dust was sacred to him. The patriot in him speaks to us through the following exhortation, among others: 'Be proud that thou art an Indian and proudly proclaim: "I am an Indian—every Indian is my brother." ... Proudly proclaim at the top of thy voice: "The Indian is my brother, the Indian is my life, India's gods and goddesses are my God, India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure-garden of my youth. the sacred heavens, the Varanasi of my old age."' These soul-stirring words still ring in our ears more than sixty years after the death of Vivekananda.

We have it on the Swami's own authority that he went to America to find money for humanitarian work in India. He wrote and spoke to this effect on several occasions. Thus, in an address to the Parliament of Religions, Chicago, participation in which was the ostensible object of his first voyage to America, he told his audience: 'I came here to seek aid for my impoverished people, and I fully realized how difficult it was to get help for heathens from Christians in a Christian land.'

Succour to suffering Indian humanity was to be but the first step in the regeneration of India. But it was not all. A sound education is among the essential pre-conditions of progress, and Vivekananda felt the need of a sound system of national education. He had a poor opinion of the system of education prevailing in India at that time. He condemned it in no uncertain terms. While admitting that the education imparted in India had 'some good points', he emphasized that it had a tremendous disadvantage which was so great that the good things were all weighed down. 'In the first place, it is not a man-making education. it is merely and entirely a negative education. A negative education, or any training based on negation, is worse than death. We must have man-making, life-building, character-making, assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library. ...We must have the whole education of our country, spiritual and secular, in our own hands, and it must be on national lines and through national methods as far as practicable.' Vivekananda wanted the reconstruction of Indian intellect by 'spreading a real knowledge of Sanskrit', the language of Indian culture, by the integration of 'Western science in it, and by reviving the Indian universities, so that they might produce men rather than diplomats and officials'. Mind, body, and soul were to be harmoniously developed. Man-making was to be the aim of education. The Swami wanted Indians to be brave. He wanted to teach them to walk with their heads erect and with their chests out. He stressed the need of self-help, which, as we all know, is the best help. The habit of depending on others must be given up. He wrote in 1894 to Alasinga Perumal, a Madras disciple of his: 'Every nation must save itself, we must not depend on funds from America for the revival of Hinduism, for that is a delusion.' He wrote to another Madras disciple, Dr. Nanjunda Rao, in 1896: 'You must not depend on foreign help. Nations, like individuals, must help themselves. This is real patriotism. If a nation cannot do that, its time has not yet come.' Self-help, it may be recalled, furnished the philosophical basis of the Swadeshi (use of indigenous goods) and the national education movements launched by the patriots of Bengal after the notorious Bengal partition of 1905. Mahatma Gandhi's gospel of the spinning wheel and his constructive programme are among the classic examples of socio-national self-help in practice. Every student of Indian history knows the role played by them in the Indian people's uphill struggle for the recovery of their lost national heritage. They broke the inertia of ages and did not a little to bring back the joys of life and living to the dumb millions of rural India.

Great as was Vivekananda's love for India and for persons and things Indian, he was a severe critic of the defects and drawbacks of Indian society and character. He lashed relentlessly at all social abuses, inequities, and superstitions that came to his notice. Nor did he spare the social institutions that had outgrown their utility. He fought against sectarianism wherever it was to be found. Referring to the very large number of *sādhus* (wandering monks) roaming all over the country and the class of hereditary priests eating the bread of idleness in a country where famines were a regular visitation. He wrote to Swami Brahmananda: 'A country where millions live on the flower of the '*mohua*' plant, and a million or two of '*sādhus*' and a hundred million or so of Brāhmaṇas suck the blood out of these poor people (of India), without even the least effort for their amelioration—is that a country or hell? Is that a religion or the devil's dance?' Untouchability, that Satanic device, which had reduced millions to the sub-human level and had driven thousands to the folds of Islam and Christianity, had few outspoken critics like Vivekananda. His condemnation of the inhuman system shows how his heart bled for its hapless victims. He wrote in a letter in 1894: 'Well, do you think there is any religion left in India? The paths of knowledge, devotion, and *yoga*—all have gone, and now there remains only that of Don't-touchism—Don't touch me! Don't touch me! The whole world is impure, and I alone am pure! ... Nowadays, Brahman is neither in the recesses of the heart, nor in the highest heaven, nor in all beings—now He is in the cooking pot.'

Time and again did the Swami turn the searchlight inward and declare that our internal dissensions, selfishness, and mutual jealousy and hatred were among the principal causes of our degeneration; that these cankers ate into the very vitals of the nation and perpetrated slavery. His observations in this context may be read profitably by every Indian having the well-being of the country at heart: 'A cloud of impenetrable darkness has at present equally enveloped us all. ... What we have in India are only deep-rooted envy and strong antipathy against one another, morbid desire to ruin by hook or by crook the weak, and dog-like to lick the feet of the strong. Now the highest satisfaction consists in the display of wealth and power, devotion in self-gratification, wisdom in the accumulation of transitory objects, *yoga* in hideous diabolical practices, work in the slavery of others, civilization in the base imitation of foreign nations, eloquence in the use of abusive language, the merit of literature in extravagant flatteries of the rich, or in the diffusion of ghastly obscenities.' The Swami boldly calls the spade a spade and prescribes remedies for the socio-national distemper. In his own words, 'without mutual co-operation, we can never make ourselves strong men'.

Unfortunately, many of the evils complained of by Vivekananda pollute the country's atmosphere even today more than a decade after the end of alien rule. What is more regrettable is that they seem to have become worse than ever.

The so-called low classes constitute the very corner-stone of the socio-national edifice. The very life of the nation and society depends on them. This is why Swamiji declared: 'These uncared for lower classes of India—the peasants and weavers and the rest who have been conquered by foreigners and are looked down upon by their own people—it is they who, from time immemorial, have been working silently, without even getting the remuneration of their labours! ... Those whose heart's blood has contributed to all the progress that has been made in the world—well, who cares to praise them? Ye ever-trampled labouring classes of India! I bow to you.'

The regeneration of the motherland will remain a will-o'-the-wisp, unless we can improve the lot of the so-called lower classes and untouchables and bring back the joys of living to them. The hungry, down-trodden

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'Daridra Nārāyaṇas' of India must be given back their lost self-confidence and sense of self-respect. They must be taught to realize that they, too, have a stake in the country. A nation is an organic whole. The weakness or backwardness of any section of a nation retards the progress of the nation as a whole. The chain, it is well known, is as strong as its weakest link. The Swami was not unaware of this truth. He writes: 'Have you ever seen a country in the whole history of the world rise, unless there was a uniform circulation of the national blood all over its body? Know this for certain, that no great work can be done by that body, one limb of which is paralysed.' He emphasized that India herself is to blame for her degeneration and downfall, that they were primarily due to the neglect of the masses by the classes. 'It is simply due to your having despised the masses', he wrote, 'that you have now been living a life of slavery for the last thousand years; it is therefore that you are objects of hatred in the eyes of foreigners.' He dreamt of a great future for the Indian masses and wrote long, long ago: 'Let her (new India) arise out of the peasant's cottage, grasping the plough, out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler, and the sweeper. Let her spring from the grocer's shop from besides the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emanate from the factory, from marts and from markets. Let her emerge from the groves and forests, from hills and mountains. These common people have suffered oppressions for thousands of years—suffered it without murmur, and as a result, have got wonderful fortitude. They have suffered eternal misery, which has given them unflinching vitality. Living on a handful of grain, they can convulse the whole world.' Those acquainted with Indian conditions will readily admit that developments taking place in independent India are very much along the lines envisaged by the Swami. The prophet in him again seems to have come to the fore. Let it not be supposed for a moment that the journey's end has been reached. What we see is only a beginning and a beginning in the right direction it undoubtedly is. There are hesitations, lapses, errors, and consequent retrogression; but the trend is unmistakable. There are clear indications that, in the new India taking shape before our eyes, the builders of the edifice of national strength and prosperity—the long-neglected, long-suffering Indian masses—will have their rights fully recognized and accorded the place that is rightfully theirs. The time for jubiliation is not, however, as yet. The 'vast undone' still far outweighs the 'little done'. But, in this connection, let us remember Swamiji's warning: 'Keep the motto before you: "Elevation of the masses without injuring their religion."'

Politics and patriotism nowadays go hand in hand. That Vivekananda was a great patriot will be readily admitted. That he was not a politician will be admitted equally readily. Paradoxical as it may sound, chapters and verses may be quoted to show that the Swami was allergic to politics. He declared again and again with all the emphasis at his command that he had, and would have, nothing to do with politics.

Was Vivekananda a revolutionary? No, not in the sense in which that term is usually understood. But his life and teachings, his dynamic personality and personal magnetism had a tremendous impact on his country and on his age. He burst 'on society like a bomb'. His message of fearlessness, self-confidence, self-help, and self-respect released energies and brought about a revolution in the truest sense of the term. It finally awakened the somnolent leviathan that India of his day was. At his death at the turn of the century (1902), the giant was already awake, stretching its limbs and viewing the situation. To quote Romain Rolland: 'That day (the day on which he spoke on 'The Future of India' at Madras in 1897), the awakening of the torpid Colossus (India) began. If the generation that followed saw three years after Vivekananda's death the revolt of Bengal (the anti-Partition movement), the prelude to the great movement of Tilak and Gandhi, ... it is due to the initial shock, to the mighty "Lazarus, come forth!" of the message of Madras.'

Not a few great Indians of our times were influenced and inspired by Vivekananda. Gandhiji is on record as having declared publicly that the study of the works of Vivekananda had been a great help to him and that they had 'lighted in him the flame of love of India' and had enhanced his understanding of India. Vivekananda was, in fact, the forerunner of Gandhi in more respects than one. They covered much common ground. Both inculcated fearlessness, which, according to one of his biographers, is Gandhi's principal legacy to India. To the one as well as to the other, the service of down-trodden humanity was the best worship of God. If the untouchables were 'Harijans', i.e. the Lord's own ones, to Gandhi, the down-trodden Indian masses were 'Daridra Nārāyaṇas' to Vivekananda. Vivekananda's conception of non-resistance—it was actually non-violent resistance or non-acceptance—is not basically different from Gandhiji's non-violent non-co-operation. Self-help emphasized by the Swami was, as noted above, the objective aimed at by the gospel of the spinning wheel and the whole constructive programme prescribed by the Mahatma. 'The spiritual and intellectual life of Aurobindo Ghose', wrote Swami Ashokananda of the Ramakrishna Order to Romain Rolland, the biographer of Sri Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, and Gandhi, 'has been strongly influenced by the life and teaching of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. He is never tired of showing the importance of Vivekananda's ideas.' As for Rabindranath Tagore, Romain Rolland writes: 'It is permissible to presume that in him are united and harmonized the two currents of the Brahmo Samaj (trasmitted by his father, the Maharshi) and of the neo-Vedāntism of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. . . . There is no doubt that the breath of such a forerunner (as Vivekananda) must have played some part in his evolution.'

Vivekananda's teachings electrified the country. He became the idol of the revolutionaries of Bengal and his works were very popular with them. Vivekananda's photographs and works were looked upon as dangerous objects by the minions of law and order. The possession of a photograph of the Swami was almost a crime in the eyes of the government of the day. The Ramakrishna Mission, a purely spiritual, humanitarian, and non-political institution founded by Vivekananda in 1897, and its sympathizers fell into the bad book of the bureaucracy. Lord Carmichael, the Governor of Bengal, a sympathizer and an admirer of the Mission's ideals and activities though he was openly declared in 1916 that terrorists had been joining the Mission to achieve their objects with greater ease. After this fulmination of the all-powerful provincial satrap, a ban on the Mission seemed to be a foregone conclusion. The danger was, however, averted only through the efforts of the Mission's devoted English and American friends in high places, who defended it in a long memorandum dated January 22, 1917.

Thus we find that Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were an unceasing fountain of inspiration to all those who infused life and vigour into New India later. In the words of Romain Rolland: 'New India ... is impregnated with the soul of Ramakrishna. The twin star of the Paramahamsa and the hero who translated his thought into action dominates and guides her present destinies. Its warm radiance is the leaven working within the soil of India and fertilizing it... The king of thinkers, the king of poets, and the Mahatma—Aurobindo Ghose, Tagore, and Gandhi—have grown, flowered, and borne fruit under the double constellation of the Swan and the Eagle—a fact publicly acknowledged by Aurobindo and Gandhi.'

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(A BIRTH CENTENARY TRIBUTE)

By His Excellency U Thant

[His Excellency U Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations, was the chief speaker of the evening at a dinner held by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, at the Warwick Hotel, on March 28, 1963, to celebrate the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda. The following is the text of his speech delivered on the occasion.]

We are celebrating here tonight Swami Vivekananda's Centenary, and on this occasion, it will be superfluous for me to recount many of his extraordinary activities. But in the brief space of time at my disposal, I would like to touch on a few aspects of his missionary work, particularly in this country.

Swami Vivekananda, as most of you are aware, was the greatest spiritual ambassador of India, not only in her own history, but also in the history of Asia. One of the main results of his historic visit to the United States of America, over sixty years ago, was the finding of a synthesis between India and the United States, and through it, between Asia and the West. To understand Swami Vivekananda, it is very important to understand the cultural and spiritual background of India and Asia.

In Asia, as most of you know, we attach more importance to the mind than to the body, and still more importance to the spirit than to the mind. Traditionally, the aim of education in Asia has been—I stress the word traditionally—to discover what is happening inside of us, to discover what is the truth, to discover the truth inside of us, to learn to understand the extraordinary moral and spiritual qualities of man. In other words, the traditional aim of education and culture and civilization in Asia has been, throughout the centuries, the discovery of oneself, and to try to understand the spiritual qualities such as humility, reverence for old people, and so on.

In the West, the stress has been on the development of the intellect, if my interpretation of Western educational aims and ideals is correct. There is too much stress on the intellectual development of man. The aim of education in the West—when I say West, I mean the United States of America, Western Europe, and also other European countries—has been, and still is, to create doctors, scientists, engineers, to discover outer space, to go to the moon and to Mars and the stars; the development of the moral and spiritual qualities of man is more or less ignored.

I feel rather strongly that the exclusive intellectual development without a corresponding moral and spiritual development is sure to lead us from one crisis to another. At the same time, in the middle of the twentieth century, in this space age and atomic age, a purely moral and spiritual development unaccompanied by a corresponding intellectual development is also an anachronism. So what is necessary in this second half of the twentieth century is a certain kind of synthesis, a certain kind of harmony, a certain harmonizing activity, by which man may be fully integrated. The development of man must be in all levels—intellectual, moral and spiritual. Only then man will be able to achieve the objectives set out in his own particular religion.

I think the main purpose of Swami Vivekananda's mission to this country was to find a harmony, a kind of synthesis between the Eastern concept of culture and civilization and the Western concept of culture and civilization. What we need today is not to neglect or ignore the moral and spiritual qualities of mankind left by centuries of tradition and which are the key to all religion. It is much more true of these tense times, than sixty years ago.

Another aspect of Swami Vivekananda's mission, to my knowledge, is the need of tolerance in human relations. Not only religious tolerance, but also tolerance in all spheres of activity. I think this message is also very necessary in these tense times. If we recount a few phases of historical development, this will become clear. A few centuries ago, there was no such thing as religious tolerance. Religious tolerance was unthinkable. Let us take, for instance, the crusades. During the time of the crusades, the Christians believed, and they believed very strongly, that all non-Christians were heretics. But according to European history during the time of the crusades, the Muslims also believed very strongly that Christians were heretics. So both the Christians and the Muslims (they were known as Saracens in those days) decided to put the others to the sword. Various crusades took place resulting in the death of tens of thousands of people, both Christians and Muslims, but when reason prevailed they realized that both the great religions could exist in amity, side by side, without clashes, without hostilities, and without war. And since that time Christianity and Islam exist side by side in amity. Now, in the twentieth century, of course, there is religious tolerance. There may be some exceptional cases in certain parts of the world, but generally speaking, what humanity did not experience, say, a hundred or two hundred years ago is a reality now. Although there was no religious tolerance two or three generations ago, there is today religious tolerance.

With the same analogy, I may say, and I am sure you will agree with me, that in the second half of the twentieth century there is no political tolerance. We should not be surprised. Human nature is such that it likes to indulge in some passions like hatred and bitterness—sometimes even hysteria. But my feeling is, although there is no political tolerance in these days, there will be political tolerance, if not in our generation, at least in the next one or two generations. This spirit of tolerance, this philosophy of 'live and let live', this concept of trying to understand the other's point of view, has been what Swami Vivekananda strove to put across, particularly to the American people. I think it is a very great lesson to be learned from the teachings of Swamiji.

When we say that his main mission here was a search for a synthesis and an appeal for tolerance, we should also try to understand the concept of culture and of civilization. The concept of civilization, of course, is very difficult to define. There is a mistaken impression—assumption, if I may say so—regarding the concept of civilization. There seems to be a general feeling that there is a kind of civilization existing in the West and a different type of civilization existing in the East. I feel that this is a fallacy. Civilization connotes certain qualities of the heart. A civilized Indian, for instance, cannot be distinguished, mentally, morally, and spiritually, from a civilized American. But a civilized Indian or a civilized American will find himself very different from any of his own compatriots in his own country; so we cannot classify civilization in a particular region. It is primarily concerned with the qualities of the heart and the mind.

There is also another misconception that wars and tensions were generated by conflicts of civilization and conflicts of cultures. I think this is also a fallacy. If you read history, you will find that England and France, or France and Germany, had wars for centuries, off and on, although they belonged to the same system of civilization and the same system of culture. The same can be said of many Asian countries which have been, throughout the centuries, at war with one another, although they belonged to the same culture and they subscribed to the same religious systems. So tensions and conflicts do not arise necessarily from the conflicts of culture, or conflicts of civilizations. They arise primarily out of the evil in human beings, irrespective of the geographical regions they belong to. I think this fact also was stressed by Swami Vivekananda in many of his speeches and statements.

He, of course, attempted to teach many of his American friends the methods and procedures involved in meditation and contemplation which have been the traditional methods of finding our own selves. As I said earlier, the stress of education in Asia, and particularly in India, which is a very rich cultural country for thousands of years, has been to discover what is happening inside of us. I have said earlier that the stress of education in the West has been traditionally for the intellectual development of man. But in Asia, particularly in India, we try to discover what is happening inside of us by methods of contemplation and meditation, which is very difficult for the Western audience to understand. I think Swami Vivekananda attempted to present a very simple exposition of these methods of contemplation and meditation, so that the Westerners may not be lopsided in their development—exclusively in the intellectual field. Because he felt, very rightly, that the mere intellectual development will lead only to the discovery of what is outside of us. In America, in Europe, in Russia, what is outside of us is very clearly defined, while what is inside of us remains a deep, dark, jungle tract. So he brought out this idea of meditation and contemplation, with some success, as you all know from many of the publications published since his visit here, and I think it may perhaps be appropriate for me to read one of his statements regarding this method of meditation and contemplation.

This is what Swamiji wrote on meditation: 'You must keep the mind fixed on one object; meditation should be like an unbroken stream of oil. The ordinary man's mind is scattered on different objects, and at the time of meditation, too, the mind is at first liable to wander. Let any desire whatever arise in the mind, sit calmly, and watch what sorts of ideas are coming. By continuing to watch in that way, the mind becomes calm and there are no thought waves in it. These waves represent the thought activity of the mind. Those things that you have previously thought about too deeply have transformed themselves into a subconscious current, and therefore, they come up in the mind in meditation. The rise of these waves of thoughts during meditation is evidence that your mind is tending towards concentration.' To my knowledge, this is the simplest recipe to practise this very noble and very desirable art of meditation and contemplation, which is still being practised in many parts of Asia. Then, Swami Vivekananda, among many of his messages, had this very significant and very pertinent message for these tense times. He said: 'In this country (America), I do not come to convert you to a new belief. I want you to keep to your own belief. I want to make the Methodist a better Methodist, the Presbyterian a better Presbyterian, the Unitarian a better Unitarian.' On this subject also, I think it is worth quoting his attitude toward religious tolerance, which is one of the wisest maxims that ever came into my experience. He said: 'I accept all the religions that were in the past, and worship them all; I worship God with every one of them, in whatever form they worship Him. I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammedan; I shall enter the Christian church and kneel before the Crucifix; I shall enter the Buddhist temple, where I shall take refuge in the Buddha and his Law; I shall go into the forest and sit down in meditation with the Hindu who is trying to see the Light which enlightens the hearts of everyone. Not only shall I do these things, but I shall keep my heart open for all that may come in the future.'

These are very wise words and, friends, on this auspicious occasion, when we are doing honour to one of the greatest men of all time, let us dedicate ourselves anew to this pledge; to make Christians better Christians, Hindus better Hindus, Muslims better Muslims, Buddhists better Buddhists, and Jews better Jews.

The activity of an illumined soul must necessarily be understood on two levels. There is, first, the outer activity, which embraces the visible purposes of his life and which can be seen and comprehended by all in greater or lesser degree. But strenuous and inspired as such activity may be, it occupies only a part of his mind, by far the larger and more potent part operating on a level hidden from our view. Indeed, it would seem that the very essence of such a person consists in the fact that far beneath his surface mind are depths that are fully awake and fully absorbed in God. It is said that in its deepest levels the mind of a saint is so close to God that His effulgence forms, as it were, its very substance and texture. Surely that vast and silent part of Swamiji's mind, which was at one with God even while he was in the midst of the most 'cyclonic' outer life, not only served to inform and illumine his surface mind but had a function of its own which constituted the true and special significance of his mission. . . .

Wherever Swamiji went, whatever his external activities, his mission was, first and always, to impart spirituality to whoever was able to receive it. Such was his very nature. Whether he was answering questions regarding India's customs, lecturing on Hinduism, or castigating the bigoted and hypocritical, whether he was attending social gatherings or making chance acquaintances on trains or in hotels, he was, under all circumstances, shedding divine light. Quite literally he planted the seeds of spirituality deep in the hearts of innumerable human beings, changing the course of their lives for ever. So spontaneously and naturally did Swamiji do this that it almost seems as if he himself were not aware of it. But such 'unawareness' has always characterized prophets and saviours—just as it characterizes the sun, which does not deliberate upon whether or not it shall shine.

MARIE LOUISE BURKE

THE DOCTRINE OF OBEDIENCE: ITS IMPLICATIONS

By Swami Vimalananda

[Swami Vimalananda is the Head of the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Kalady (Kerala). In this scholarly article, he has dealt with the doctrine of obedience as it generally obtains in various spheres of normal and religious life and discusses its real implications.]

1. Flexibility and change characterize nature. This, however, does not preclude conformity and submission to restraint in the occurrence of events and behaviour of objects. Fluidity and variation, are dots and dashes in nature, outlining a circle in which universal laws undulate like waves and troughs in the sea. Freaks do exist; but they do not break the swing of law which forges a unity in variety and offers a picture of shades and contrasts. Everywhere in nature we meet objects tall or short, bulky or slender, strong or weak, hard or soft, rough or smooth, bright or dark, quick or slow, and having gradations between them. Quantitative and qualitative differences of things subject them to restraint or make them obey forces that act upon them. This phenomenon we observe in the inanimate and the animate parts of nature.

2. Conscious or unconscious submission to restraint is universal. Though the word obedience usually denotes a conscious attitude expressed in human behaviour, it has a wider application, covering inanimate, animate, conscious, and self-conscious levels of existence. A few examples are cited to make this clear. A machine obeys the mechanic; tides in the ocean obey the law of attraction; minerals obey the laws of change under heat and pressure; the flora and fauna of a region obey the seasons; migratory birds obey their innate urge to seek a fresh habitat; a thirsty man obeys the guide who leads him to water; a sick man obeys the doctor who promises a cure; a dissatisfied workman obeys the leader who pleads for his advantage; an army obeys its commander; a child obeys his parents and teachers; a religious man obeys his spiritual director. It is clear from the above that at inanimate and low animate levels obedience is a mechanical reaction to external forces or internal urges, acting circumstantially. At a higher human level, the quality of obedience differs markedly, and becomes, as a rule, conscious and purposeful. The cause for it may be traced to the fact that man cannot live without society; and any human society has its own syntax of superordination and subordination based on obedience. Even the languages we use show the influence of the society which developed it.

3. Perhaps, the early Indo-European languages, representing the inflectional group of speeches, reflect some traits of the Aryan polity in their arrangement: Pāṇini enunciated in two aphorisms (*Svatantraḥ kartā* and *Kartur īpsitatamaṁ karma*) that the subject of a sentence is independent, and what the subject desires most is the object. A sentence is a combination of words mutually so related as to express a unified sense which none of the components can individually express. So also, a society is organized for a common end, and that end is achieved by the combined efforts of all the individuals constituting it. No individual, however important, can achieve that social end by himself. In a polity of the monarchic type, the king is the independent sovereign; but without his ministers, officers, servants, and subjects he has no existence. Functional grammar of languages here helps us to understand the grammar of politics. In syntactic languages, a mere array of words cannot express a sense if there is no proper subordination, concordance, and government of various parts of speech. An adjective qualifies, a preposition governs, an

adverb modifies, and there must be concordance in number. Each word may be important in its own position, functioning in a particular manner to express the import of the sentence. But if a sentence is ambiguous, or conveys two different meanings, it is an invalid statement. It is like a house divided against itself, or like a split society or State which works with opposite purposes, and thus it destroys itself. An independent subject alone does not make a true sentence; only a properly subordinated array of words does it. Although in a lexicon every word stands shoulder to shoulder, when they enter into a sentence to function, they have to obey the rules of grammar. Man, too, as a functionary in a combination, has to obey rules and submit to restraint. A dismantled aeroplane may sometimes show about sixty thousand parts which even designers of each segment may not recognize, not to speak of laymen; but when the parts are in position they function properly, because they obey the laws of dynamics; and, together, they keep the gigantic structure in the sky. Whether it is a sentence or a mechanical contrivance, it is mutual accord of parts that give significance to the whole.

4. Jaimini, who systematized the methods of Vedic interpretation and established a philosophy of sacrificial work (*yajña*) over two millenniums back, laid down that, in a given situation, sequence in time and place is possible only on the arrangement of principal and accessary. Two things cannot occupy the same place except as the container and the contained. Two events cannot occur at the same time except in different places. In the sphere of values, what replaces will have greater importance and validity than what is replaced. In the view of the Vedic Mīmāṁsaka teachers, a pre-planned *yajña* demands that every act in it and every ingredient of it must be in the proper time and in the right place, and that the prescribed period of time must be occupied only by those acts in order to complete its performance without any blemish or corruption. In such circumstances, priority and posteriority in the events and superordination and subordination in the personnel and ingredients become inevitable.

5. Faith is the precondition of all correct and purposive action. Faithful and unselfish performance of work must be made the leading rule of a person's conduct in order to enable him to concentrate the mind on the perfect doing of his duty. Accuracy in liturgical acts is, therefore, considered supremely important. To secure religious exactitude, the Mīmāṁsaka teachers consider *yajña* as a supremely sacred duty, and not merely as a social act. When an act is deemed sacred, no part of it can be missed, altered, or done listlessly. The sages of the Vedic times and the masters who succeeded them were able to establish discipline in different orders to such an eminent degree and produce men and women of supreme competence, only because in their systems, there was no room anywhere for frivolity, and because they considered any transgression in the performance of a sacrifice as sin. Even a painstaking, labour-consuming, extensive, and expensive performance of a religious work was considered null and void if there was the slightest corruption in its management, or any mispronunciation of a formula, or some error in the procedure, or omission of an ingredient. Such mental discipline is unparalleled in ancient history.

6. This meticulous care of the *yājñikas* and Vedic teachers, which pervaded every parallel discipline, directly resulted from the central Vedic concept that work is greater than its results and even the performers of the work. The main purpose of the Vedic scriptures, according to the Mīmāṁsaka, is to incite men to action, that is, to command. Whatever else is said or unsaid in it is but a preparation for the fulfilment of the command. This being accepted as the import of all significant Vedic passages, a verb expressing action naturally gains precedence over all the other

words; and in a verbal expression, the injunctive suffix is the spearhead of action, because it conveys the efficient force behind the command. Who is to obey the command? The command, certainly, does not lose its inciting force if there happens to be none to obey it. The force of wind does not abate if there are no trees to be shaken. And trees there are enough for any wind to blow upon. There are innumerable human beings seeking security and reward, and they obey the command of a reliable authority. The moment they are convinced that compliance will give them heaven hereafter or happiness here, they are incited to work. Not only that much. The Mīmāṁsaka would go further and say that Vedic commands must be obeyed not only by the seekers of security and reward, but also by those who do not want to backslide from the moral and spiritual level they have attained in their transmigratory evolution. A section of them would assert that there is still greater benefit. If a competent aspirant performs ordained holy work with no personal motive whatsoever, but only as a matter of duty towards God, he would attain inward purity essential for self-enlightenment.

7. Man is the sport of natural impulses. He can live a worthy life only if he has self-mastery. Restraint is essential to canalize his energies toward fruitful ends. The *Bhagavad-Gītā* also emphasizes the need of such restraint and enjoins in words of transparent clarity: '*Tasmāt śāstraṁ pramāṇaṁ te kāryākāryavyavasthitau; jñātvā śāstravidhānoktaṁ karma kartum ihārhasi*—So let the Śāstra be thy authority in ascertaining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done; and, having known what is ordained by the scriptures, it befits thee to engage thyself in such activities.' Whether a person engages himself in holy works motivated by rewards, or he just fulfils his duty by doing scripture-ordained work, it is the *vidhi* or *niyoga* (the Vedic command) that goads him to perform the *yajña*. And when he has elected to obey the command and perform the holy duty, for him, then, all considerations of reward recede to the background, and the mode of operation (*itikartavyatā*) alone absorbs him completely. To him, then, everything connected with his existence tends to be a means to sacrificial work, *kratvartha*. The institutor of the sacrificial work becomes, in a sense, a limb of the sacrifice itself. If he does not utter lies, fasts, and restrains his senses during the performance of the *yajña*, it is chiefly for the blemishless completion of the *yajña*, strictly according to prescription, and not for the gain of a personal virtue. Against this background of the sovereignty of the Vedic command, the Mīmāṁsaka establishes the doctrine of *śeṣa-śeṣi-bhāva* or *aṅgāṅgī-bhāva*. The doctrine had its far-reaching effect in the field of work, worship, education, and social organization in ancient India. Under the influence of it, the entire world was taken to be the field of work (*karma-bhūmi*), and everything in it was to be seen in a graded hierarchy with the Vedic command, which was held to be eternal, at the top. Sacrificial work is the end towards which all other things move as its means. Our national poet of the Gupta period, Kālidāsa, described the Himalayas as Yajñāṅgayoni or the source of sacrificial components. *Yajña* is the *aṅgin*, or principal, and minerals, plants, animals, men, and time and space are but auxiliaries or *aṅgas* of the *yajña*.

8. The entire scheme of *yajña* is brought into existence by the command of the Veda. The power of command (*codanā*) inherent in the Vedic injunction was called Dharma. Dharma was delegated to the classes of men living in obedience to the Vedic law. All the four Varṇas and the four Āśramas obeyed the Dharma; and even a powerful emperor was but an obedient servant of Dharma, doing duties as Dharma bade him. Vedic command conveying the Dharma of each individual prescribed only duties, for it was assumed that rights followed Dharma like a shadow. Viewed in this light, the fourfold classification

of the people was not a mere sociological growth, but a psychological plan devised for the delegation of that Dharma which the Vedic command sought to perpetuate for universal good. Privileges which men enjoyed as functionaries in the scheme counted very little; the command of the scripture which they obeyed had dominance over everything else. By this arrangement, the nobler and more competent a person was, the more was he obligated. From this description, it is clear that men lived in obedience by practically submitting to the authority of the Vedas regarded as universally valid. The traditional Hindu ordered his life for centuries not as a slave of changing fashions or at the dictates of a powerful leader, but in obedience to a law which he believed to be divine and eternally binding. That is why he worked and worshipped, married and begat, bathed and slept, ate and drank, learned and taught, silently, contentedly, peacefully, and religiously in obedience to scriptural behests, doing harm to none, and making his life impersonal and spiritual. This picture is, of course, fading now owing to extrinsic social contact and assimilation.

9. We are living in the age of freedom and self-determination brought on by a cultivated scientific bent of mind. New views and new values have risen in the intellectual world. And so we may naturally ask: Is not man sufficiently intelligent to propose tasks for himself and capable of steering his life beneficially? Why should he obey the command of anyone else? An affirmative answer to this question is impossible, because even at this stage of civilization a vast majority of human beings do not know for themselves what is really wholesome for them, and they hinder rather than help the commonweal, particularly when self-love clashes with altruism. So enunciation of positive laws are as necessary today as it was in ancient times. It is fear of punishment and consequent obedience to law that ensure order and progress in society. No doubt, all obedience to enacted laws is provisional, so far as the laws as well as complianc them are conditioned by circumstances. Ma surrenders part of his freedom to a State, to purchase his own safety and protectio and since no State can function witho some kind of coercion, statutory obedien cannot be dispensed with except in a Utopi Modern man, certainly, would ask for a sha in making the laws which he is asked to obey but he neither asks nor gets it except throu representation, and a representative is not photographic medium, reflecting each man interest exactly as it is, nor even that of majority, at times. Statutory laws essential to the existence of a commun and for the preservation of freedom its this is too patent to be established through discussion.

10. Convention or contract is the basis obedience. Children are too immature think that they obey their parents teachers, because that is the only way them to get the necessary instructi training, and protection to grow up manhood. It is mostly convention, esta lished through suggestion and example an element of fear of punishment and de rivation of satisfactions, that makes child submissive to rules. It may also fondness for the other person who is the sour of satisfaction for the child. Then, ag there is the obedience of an army, or hierarchy in an office, which rises from co tract and remuneration, backed by a sense patriotism or love of common good. Usual obedience observed in an official hiera conduces to efficient work and better resul Those who co-operate in tasks obey co mands voluntarily in order to share benefits of the enterprise, rendered hig effective through concerted efforts. At level, obedience is not slavish submission dogmatic authority, but careful and consid submission, based more on discrimina than on convention, more on personal in than on religious or ethical impulse.

essence of contract is faithfulness to agreement voluntarily entered and voluntarily dissolved. This is the ideal obedience of a servant in any scheme. It is ideally ethical when both take a kindly interest in the concerns and welfare of each other. There is no question of blind submission in contract, and when one party starts grumbling the other agrees to relinquish, as both keep freedom of self-determination.

11. Nowhere is the doctrine of obedience worked out so earnestly as in religious orders. In this respect, the Roman Catholic Church stands out distinctly. All religions teach that man begins to live only when he practises self-discipline. Self-assertion does not take the religious aspirant to his goal; so he is shown the path of self-obliteration the moment he starts on his religious adventure. According to Catholic religion, sainthood offers the ideal of Christian perfection, and Jesus Christ represents the highest illustration of a saintly character. *Vita tua via nostra* (Thy life is our way) is the motto of the saint. Since Jesus Christ openly declared that he and the Father in Heaven are one, obedience in Christianity is a gift really made to God; for all authority is from God. The Catholic faith analyses three kinds of authority, namely, that of the natural order of the family, that of the spiritual order of the Church, and of the social order of the government. While obedience to the first two orders is regarded as universally valid, obedience to the third order is of a provisional character. The competence of the State to order the individual family or its religious life by legislation cannot be accepted without question. In the first two cases, obedience stands opposed to disobedience, while in the case of the last failure to obey the State law is considered only self-determination, or personal autonomy, or maybe, at the last resort, construed as rebellion liable to punishment and suppression. To a Catholic, religious disobedience is an offence against God.

12. The above attitude of religion toward family, Church, and State is not without justification. Infancy of birds or mammals is usually short, and the instinctive clinging of the young one to the parent in their case vanishes as soon as the offspring is strong enough to fend for itself. Further, animals have no time-binding sense, as they have little or no memory. Human beings, on the other hand, have a prolonged infancy and nonage, entailing on them dependence on parents and subordination to elders for a protracted period. In the circumstances, the family becomes the true and natural basis of human life and well-being. Though it is true that some parents may miserably fail in rearing children properly, their substitutes, at best, cannot do what cautious, enlightened, careful parents can do for their children. States sprang up when aggregates of families surrendered to a sovereign power part of their freedom, in return for the protection and security they received. Without proper moulding of youth by age at home and in the school, and obedience to the laws of the State, social inheritance and civilization are not possible. It is generally observed that a man will do a thing as another wants, only if he has not the power to do as he himself wants. Therefore, persuasive or compulsory coercion is behind all conformity to standard. Immaturity and inexperience stand in the way of the child's discovering for himself what is his own good, and hence only the family or its surrogate can bring up a child to manhood. All religions have, therefore, stressed through ordinances of sacred books that it is the duty of parents to raise children under obedience, keeping the trust sacred and inviolable. The State had to concede *Patria Potestas* and the Church supported it. The rebelling child is to be conformed to a standard by the parents even as anti-social elements are made conformists by the State. Conformity implies an initial difference which is moulded into similarity. The child has before it a model, or standard, to which it has to be conformed, and a harmony is to be established between

himself and the model before him. The conventions, institutions, and *mores* of the parents are to be assimilated through adaptation and compliance. This can be accomplished only by living in obedience. Until the child realizes the advantages that accrue to him through membership in the family group, he must be made to obey rules and conform to the standards through mild or sharp coercion. And parents who afford them protection and satisfaction are the fittest to command obedience and conformity. Keeping all this in view, religion teaches that disobedience to parents is a sin against God, chiefly in the interest of the individual himself and of the family and the society. Despite occasional parental selfishness, cruelty, and callousness met with in this world, children's obedience to elders is universally admitted as a duty.

13. In paragraphs 6-8 it was made clear that the Vedic teachers considered the command of the Vedas to be the supreme authority in matters of conduct and morals. This is but natural in the light of the impersonal attitude taken by Indian sages all through. This impersonal spirit is exprcssed more than once by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya in his *bhāṣyas*. He says: *Pramāṇa-cintāyāṁ puruṣapravṛttir-nodāharaṇam arhati*—when we are engaged in an enquiry into the question of validity, it does not befit us to cite the doings of individuals. This critical attitude is not, however, encouraged in the Catholic faith which considers the Church supreme in all matters pertaining to the salvation of man. Although the Church became ritualistic and even imperialistic later on, its original idea was completely moral and spiritual. Roman Catholic theology accepts a personal God; 'personal', in the context, means responsive to men in the way that human beings can be responsive. Love, goodness, and responsiveness are the attributes of personal God. Not merely reason, but the soul's communion with Him establishes this truth. According to Anslem, this personal God is 'that than which a greater can't be conceived—*Aliqud quo nihil majus cogitari potest*'. St. Theresa, too, exclaimed: 'O my Lord! O my King! who can describe Thy Majesty? It is impossible not to see that Thou art Thyself the greatest ruler of all.' Further, she elsewhere added: 'Our Lord said to me once that there was no obedience where there was no resolution to suffer. Nothing can sustain man's faith more adequately than the Most High. "We inevitably grow ourselves unto the likeness of that which we contemplate with adoration and self-surrender."' This is the central doctrine from which spiritual Christianity takes its rise.

14. In Christianity, like any other activity of life, piety is an affair of the community as well as of the individual; and hence obedience is the *sine qua non* of piety. The Roman Church saw that spiritual reality cannot flourish in individuals, unless it is nourished by a corresponding activity on the part of the community at large. Saints are born only in a country where men have learned to admire and appreciate sanctity. So the Church made an earnest, powerful, and extensive attempt to render itself the school of God. Men were taught to love the Lord and abase themselves before Him in utter humility and thankfulness. For it is from humility that obedience stems, and from obedience renunciation of self-will, patience, gentleness, piety, bountifulness, soberness, chastity, and other virtues follow. In the school of God, his servant learns to destroy with the powerful aid of His grace, pride, vainglory, self-complacency, desires for human favour and honour, and motions of impatience.

15. A Christian monastery of the mediaeval times was established on the ideal of a Christian family with the abbot as the father and other members as obedient sons and brethren under him. The abbot was elected for life and all monks remained usually attached to the same monastery. The need of each one was met, and from each, obedience, humility, and stability were expected in turn. The brethren received what they

needed, and if one got more than another, no one should grumble or murmur. Everyone was to be employed in doing good. Manual work was part of monastic discipline. Seniority among brethren ranked from the moment a novice entered the religious home. Every member had to act towards the other as they would act towards Christ. St. Benedict laid down the rule: When the elder passes by, let the younger arise and give place to him to sit down; nor let the younger presume to sit with him unless the elder bids him.

16. The order of a superior was to be considered as command of God since the abbot was the representative of God and appointed elders were his delegates. The extent and function of authority which each one wielded and the measure of his responsibility were clearly defined. Superiors could not transgress the proper sphere of authority. A Christian monk ought to hold nothing dearer than Christ; for him, there is no motive for obedience higher than that. Thomas A. Kempis advised those who were in the monastery: 'Be desirous to do the will of another than your own, and wish and pray always that the will of God may be wholly fulfilled in you.' Loyalty to the profession demanded not only the correct internal disposition but also the external qualities. The picture of obedience in its external operation is given in St. Benedict's Rule as follows: Leaving immediately occupations and forsaking their own will, with their hands disengaged, and leaving unfinished what they were about, with the speedy step of obedience, they should follow by their deeds the voice of him who commands! Such prompt, unhesitant, cheerful, eager, generous obedience can be cultivated only by those who have grown sensitive and alert through prayer and study and have gained power of quick perception. This kind of disciplined obedience is always acceptable to God and sweet to man. The heart behind the mechanical obedience accompanied with a suppressed audible grumble is watched by God, and the disciplined obedience of the loving and tranquilly uncritical servant is pleasing to Him. Every movement, every inclination, every turning of an obedient son goes to form his character. A son who slowly rises from the seat and slouches out of the room for a pen when the father commands, does not see Christ in the father. A disordered exterior is considered in the monastery often as an index of a disordered interior.

17. Religious obedience, however, differs from other types of obedience in one respect, namely, that it is not blind at least in one sense: 'Whenever the commands of one's superior are contrary to that of God, and above all, the precepts of charity, no one is bound to obey them, for it is written, "It is more important to obey God than man".' This early picture of living in obedience, however, underwent a lot of change in Christianity when the bride of Christ was degraded into the harlot of Caesar, or when, as Savonarola put it, the donations of Constantine poisoned the Church. When the Church became a religio-politico-social corporation and a parallel State tolerating slavery and other evils, obedience, no doubt, became a mechanical, artificial discipline. 'In striving to gain the whole world, Rome had necessarily sacrificed her own soul and that of the people on whom her rule fell. Her vault and columns weigh upon the mind with almost palpable oppression' (Wingfield Stratford: *The History of British Civilization*).

18. Having briefly surveyed the implications of the doctrine of obedience in different disciplines, I would consider it a serious lacuna in this paper, if reference is not made to this important doctrine as conceived by the greatest religious teacher of Modern India, Swami Vivekananda. Swamiji's ideas on the doctrine of obedience proceed from three sources and find their confluence in his own life. The first one is the specifically Upaniṣadic ideal of *gurubhakti* expressed all through Indian religious tradition. Śrī Śaṅkara brilliantly epitomizes it in a verse:

Bhagavan kim upādeyam? guruvacanam; heyam api ca kim? akāryam. Ko guruḥ? adhigata-tattvaḥ śiṣyahitāya udyatas-satatam —Sir, what must be accepted? *Guru's* words. What must be rejected? That which is no part of one's duty. Who is a *guru?* He who has realized the truth, and who has unbroken solicitude for the welfare of the disciple.' The exemplary relation between Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda is the best illustration of this type of spiritual obedience, based on divine love for one's *guru.*

19. The second strand in Swamiji's concept of obedience is the sociological need of obedience. He quotes his *guru's* own words and says: 'The sappling must be hedged round. No doubt, it is an evil to be bound by laws, but it is necessary at the immature stage to be guided by rules.' This is the type of obedience required of a child who must obey the parents and the teachers for his own security and growth. This is the obedience of the patient who must obey the doctor for cure and health. One who is in spiritual nonage, also, must obey his spiritual elders. The motive of obedience in this case is confidence in one's guided progress and intense faith in the elder.

20. Swami Vivekananda was a *samyag-darśin* who perceived the Truth. His ultimate goal was trans-mundane. According to Swamiji, there was no duty for him who had realized complete union with God. The life of the free-in-life (*jīvanmukta*) is beyond all laws and limitations. Such are preciously few in history, though we may claim him as one. They are embodiments of love, and love in action seeks fulfilment through service. Swamiji, therefore, repeatedly advised a third strand of obedience to build up an organization for the uplift of India and the world. Let us read in his own words the nature of this type of obedience which is essential for the building up of any altruistic spiritual organization. Occasional similarity with the rules of other churches, or organizations, should not beguile us to think that Swamiji's idea of a religious organization was merely copied from an existing pattern. The triple strands of obedience according to Swamiji's concept described above will make that clear.

21. Why did Swamiji make it almost a passion of his life to build an organization? Let us study his answer in *ipsissima verba,* selected and quoted from his letters:

> Organize and found societies and go to work, that is the only way. What is wanted is a powerful organization. Do you understand me? An organization that will teach the Hindu mutual help and appreciation is absolutely necessary. We want an organization. Off with laziness!

22. What was the nature of the organization Swamiji contemplated? First, an order of trained spiritual men; for he said:

> Glory unto him on whom falls the Lord's choice. Nothing, I say, nothing can be done without the chain of discipleship, that is, the power that is transmitted from the *guru* to the disciple, and from him to his disciple, and so on. I do not believe in politics. God and truth are the only politics in the world, anything else is trash. Let him who has courage in his mind and love in his heart come with me, I want none else. Whether we be ten or two, I do not care, but those few must be perfect characters. Give up for ever the desire for name and fame and power. It is through love, a passion for truth, and tremendous energy that all undertakings are accomplished. Therefore, manifest your manhood. Neither number, nor power, nor wealth, nor learning, nor eloquence, nor anything else will prevail, but purity, *living the life,* in one word, *anubhūti,* realization. I have nothing to do with sectarianism, or party-forming and playing the frog-in-the-well. The only way of getting our divine nature manifested is by helping others to do the same. Why do those who think themselves unfit to teach other fellow-beings wear the teacher's garb and earn their bread by cheating them? Only that kind of work which develops our spirituality is work, whatever fosters materiality is not work. Those to whom religion is a trade are forced to become

narrow and mischievous by their introduction into religion of the competitive, fighting, and selfish methods of the world.

23. The picture we get of an institution in the above passage is that of a select spiritual community which required a fence at the sappling stage. But Swamiji had also in view a second type of organization as it is clear from the following passage:

> The term organization means division of labour. Each does his own part, and all the parts taken together express an ideal harmony. We must organize our forces not to make a sect—not on religious matters, but on the secular business part of it. It is impossible to preach the catholic ideas of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and form sects at the same time.

24. It is evident from the above passage that Swamiji did not think of organizing man's relation with God, his inmost Self, or about the laws that bring about spiritual realization. Only the *secular business part* of religion he thought of governing through an organization. In a letter to Swami Brahmananda (dated 1-8-1898), he makes clear what he meant by organizing the secular business part:

> Any amount of theoretical knowledge one may have; but unless one does the thing actually, nothing is learnt. I refer repeatedly to election, accounts, and discussion so that everybody may be prepared to shoulder the work. If one man dies, another—why another only, ten if necessary—should be ready to take it up. Secondly, if a man's interest in a thing is not roused, he will not work wholeheartedly; all should be made to understand that everyone has a share in the work and property, and a voice in the management. Give a responsible position to everyone alternately, but keep a watchful eye so that you can control when necessary; thus only can men be trained for work. Get up such a machine as will go on automatically, no matter who dies or lives. We Indians suffer from a great defect, viz. we cannot make a permanent organization—and the reason is that we never like to share power with others and never think of what will come after we are gone.

25. And Swamiji stressed again and again that obedience is necessary to sustain the spiritual institution and secular business organization, though the quality and attitude of either may slightly vary. For he said:

> Be obedient and eternally faithful to the cause of truth, humanity, and your country, and you will move the world. Obedience is the first duty. Well, do with alacrity what I ask you to. The true man is he who is strong as strength itself and possesses a woman's heart. You must feel for the millions of beings around you, and yet, you must be strong and inflexible, and you must also possess obedience; though it may seem a little paradoxical—you must possess these apparently contradicting virtues. You must be as free as the wind and as obedient as this plant and the dog.

26. It is not a statutory obedience that Swamiji emphasized, but an obedience based on a great spiritual principle which he supplemented with a number of practical instructions which would make submission to command natural and smooth. He said:

> There is but one basis of well-being, social, political, or spiritual, to know that I and my brother are one. All love is expansion, all selfishness is contraction. Love is, therefore, the only law of life, he who is selfish is dying. Be the servant while leading, be unselfish, and never listen to one friend in private accusing another. A leader must be impersonal. I want that there should be no hypocrisy, no Jesuitism, no roguery. There should not be a breath of immorality, nor a stain of policy which is bad. Beware of everything that is untrue; stick to truth and we shall succeed. Maybe slowly, but surely. The brutal mania of leading has sunk many a ship in the waters of life. He is the best ruler who can serve well.

27. A wonderful combination of freedom and obedience is the result of unselfish love and the spiritual perception, born of prayer and meditation. And when the command is wise, obedience is humble and implicit.

THE PROSPECTS OF ADVAITA AS A FUTURE WORLD PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

BY DR. S. N. L. SHRIVASTAVA

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While taking up my pen to write something for the special issue of *Prabuddha Bharata*, intended to commemorate the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda, the choice of a theme baffled my mind for some time till I came to the definite conclusion that the best tribute I could pay to the hallowed memory of this illustrious prophet of a new India and a new humanity was by writing something on the Advaita Vedānta which was the very foundation, the bed-rock, of all his inspiring teachings.

It shall be my purpose in this article to show, in particular, wherein lies the unique strength of Advaita Vedānta and its appropriateness for modern times, as well as to examine and answer some objections that have of late begun to be urged against the Advaita, of course, to the extent it is possible to do so within the short compass of a single article.

The quintessence of the Advaita Vedānta may, I think, be summed up in few words as follows. Brahman is the one, abiding, eternal, unchanging, inexpugnable Reality which is of the nature of omniscient and omnipotent Spirit. The entire universe with its animate and inanimate existents is a manifestation of this supreme Spirit, through Its inscrutable power called *māyā*, in the order of space, time, and causation. The essential and inmost 'self' of man is identical with this supreme Spirit, and the unclouded awareness of this identity constitutes his freedom or *mokṣa*, complete freedom from all the vicissitudes of conditioned existence. It is a cardinal tenet of the Advaita Vedānta, peculiarly its own, that nothing short of the awareness of this supreme identity, whatever be the height of one's spiritual ascent otherwise, is *mokṣa*, properly so called. Not until the last vestige of the unawareness of the identity (*avidyā*) has been removed, can there be real freedom for man—freedom of the spirit, not what we call the 'freedom of the will'. It is only the attainment of the awareness of this supreme identity which can post one in that state of *absolute fearlessness—abhayaṁ padaṁ*—spoken of in the Upaniṣads; for the possibility of fear cannot be finally rooted out until the awareness or the realization dawns that there is no 'other' to one's own being—*dvitīyād vai bhayaṁ bhavati*. Hence, *tattvamasi*, 'thou *art* That' is the *mahāvākya* for the Advaita embodying its ideal of *mokṣa* which is the ultimate goal of life. *Mokṣa*, from the Advaitic point of view, is distinguishable from the various grades and forms of beatific visions and rapturous delights of fellowship with the Divine which may precede the awareness of the ultimate Unity. The highest peak of knowledge for the Advaitin is the awareness of that Unity, wherein the chasm between existence and knowledge, fact and idea, the 'that' and the 'what' in Bradley's well-known phraseology, is bridged over and 'Knowledge' is Existence and Existence is Knowledge'—*bodha eva sattā sattā eva bodhaḥ*, as Śaṅkara has put it. Śaṅkara points out that the Śruti statement about the knowledge of the One by which all else is known could have meaning, unless it referred to a kind of knowledge as indicated above.

Again, *mokṣa* is not an attainment in the literal sense of the word. It is simply the recovery of awareness which has been eclipsed by unawareness (*avidyā*). The identity of the 'self' with the Absolute (*brahmātma-aikya*) is an eternal fact. The 'self', in the last analysis, is construed by Advaita Vedānta, not as a 'knower', but as *Knowledge Itself* to which the duality of 'knower' and 'known' is *given*. There can be no limitation of Knowledge, no division in Its being. All limitation, all division, is *for* Knowledge and *in* the known. The self *qua* Knowledge cannot but be identical with the Absolute or Brahman. The fact is there eternally; the awareness has to be recovered. It is the translocation of the properties of the known to Knowledge and *vice versa* which has been termed *adhyāsa* by Śaṅkara. It is this *adhyāsa*, he says, which the wise men have called *avidyā*.

Eternality of empirical individuality is denied by Buddhism and Advaita Vedānta alike. It has no reality beyond the realm of *saṁsāra*. Immortality, as conceived in both, the *amatam padam* of the Buddha, the *amṛtam* of the Upaniṣads, is not the perpetuation through all time of empirical individuality, but transcending it for ever.

There is a tendency in certain circles nowadays to caricature the idea of *mokṣa*, to ridicule it, to pooh-pooh it, and all in the name of the reality and preservation or perpetuation of 'individuality'. The critics hold out the horrors of the 'extinction' of individuality or its 'absorption' into the Absolute or some great abyss, and so on. The truth is that 'extinction', 'absorption' etc. are words with physical connotations and hardly adequate to express the spiritual experience of Identity. Then, again, the critics unduly emphasize the negative descriptions of *mokṣa*, ignoring its positive side. If *moksa* is self-losing in the narrower empirical sense, it is also a self-gaining in the larger and more extended sense—the consciousness of the Self as the All and the All as the Self—*yasmin sarvāṇi bhutāni ātmaivābhūt vijānataḥ*. It is sometimes said that the ideal of *mokṣa* is a selfish ideal, the ideal of salvation for one's own self without caring for the welfare of others. It was Swami Vivekananda who rightly pointed out that real love for, and unselfish service of, humanity and genuine compassion for all beings was only possible *after* Self-realization, after gaining the awareness of oneness of one's own self with all selves.

THE REALITY AND STATUS OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD IN ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

The crucial point in the Advaita Vedānta, and one which is most misunderstood, is the reality and status of the external world. Ever since Śaṅkara summed up the quintessence of his teaching on the point in the words—*Brahma satyam jaganmithyā*—'Brahman is Real, the world is false', the statement has come to be regarded as the *locus classicus* of the theory of 'illusoriness' of the world. It is a pity that the word used—*mithyā* (false)—is misconstrued. The false can never be equated with the illusory or the non-existent. Something which is false *must exist*; its falsity consists in its appropriating to itself properties which do not really belong to it. The false *exists*, but pretends to be what it is not. A false friend, for example, exists as a human being pretending to have qualities of a friend which he does not really have. In Vedāntic literature, the word used for what in the English language is called the illusory is *prātibhāsika*. The author of the *Vedānta-Paribhāṣā* has said: 'Existence is threefold—absolute existence, relative existence, and illusory existence. Of Brahman there is absolute existence, of ether etc. (i.e. of the world composed of ether and other elements) there is relative existence, and the silver seen in a nacre has illusory existence.'[1]

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[1] *Trividham sattvam—pāramārthikam vyāvahārikam prātibhāsikañceti. Pāramārthikam sattvaṁ brahmaṇaḥ, vyāvahārikam sattvamākāśādeḥ, prātibhāsikam sattvaṁ suktirajatādeḥ* (Chapter II).

The external world of our everyday experience appears to us to be completely objective, independent, self-subsistent, abiding and unconditionally real, all things therein being precisely what the senses reveal to us. Is it really so? Let us take up the question of the 'objectivity' of the world of our perception. We are raising the question about 'the world as perceived by us'. That there *is* an objective order of reality which we perceive cannot be denied; we cannot, possibly, perceive nothingness or a vacuity. But do our perceptions give us *that* objective reality in its original, pristine, unconditioned nature? To this question, even science does not give an affirmative answer. 'Physics', says Bertrand Russell, 'is said to be an empirical science, based upon observation and experiment.' To the question 'What can we learn by observation and experiment?' Russell, as a spokesman of scientific knowledge, which is the only kind of valid knowledge for him, replies: 'Nothing, so far as physics is concerned, except immediate data of sense: certain patches of colour, sounds, tastes, smells, etc., with certain spatio-temporal relations. The supposed contents of the physical world are *prima facie* very different from these: molecules have no colour, atoms make no noise, electrons have no taste, and corpuscles do not even smell.'[2]

It will not be possible to explain and discuss here Russell's theory of sense-data *in extenso*. I am only interested in pointing out here the bearing of Russell's conclusions on the question of the 'objectivity' of the external world of our perception, Russell's contribution on the subject being significant on account of his strict allegiance to the scientific method and his scrupulous regard for not overstepping the bounds of scientifically ascertainable knowledge. The relevant conclusions are: (1) that what we directly and immediately perceive are the sense-data which are very different from the actual or real constituents of the physical world as physics takes them to be; and (2) that these sense-data, though not subjective according to Russell, have what he calls a 'physiological subjectivity', in the sense that they are physiologically conditioned, i.e. conditioned by our sense-organs, nerves, and the brain. The physiological subjectivity is thus finely explained by Russell, taking the illustration of photons of light travelling from a star and hitting the human eye: 'When this occurs, the results are very complicated. There are a set of events between the eye and the brain which are studied by the physiologist and which have as little resemblance to the photons in the outer world as radio waves have to the orator's speech. At last, the disturbance in the nerves, which has been traced by the physiologist, reaches the appropriate region in the brain; and then, at last, the man whose brain it is sees the star. People are puzzled, because the seeing of the star seems so different from the processes that the physiologist discovered in the optic nerve, and yet it is clear that without these processes the man would not see that star.'[3] Russell, surely, differentiates his position from subjectivism, and so, he talks of 'physiological subjectivity'; but even this does not prevent him from coming to the conclusion that, in a sense, the external world of our perception is inside us: 'The whole of what we perceive without inference belongs to our private world. In this respect, I agree with Berkeley. The starry heaven that we know in visual sensation is inside us. The external starry heaven that we believe in is inferred.'[4]

It is clear from Russell's account outlined above that *the world as perceived by us*, though certainly the perception of an objective reality (I would not twist his account into a subjectivist position), is not the perception of *that objective reality in its complete and unconditioned objectivity, but as con-*

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[2] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 145.

[3] Bertrand Russell: *My Philosophical Development*, pp. 21-22.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

tioned and transformed by our physico-psycho-sensorial instrument of apprehension.

The scientist Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington, in his celebrated Gifford Lectures, *The Nature of the Physical World,* has unequivocally expressed the opinion that all our scientific knowledge is but 'a schedule of pointer-readings', 'a shadowgraph performance of the drama of familiar life', symbols and mathematical equations, without giving us any knowledge of the reality which the symbols symbolize. In his other book, *The Philosophy of Physical Science,* Eddington has considered the epistemological implications of scientific knowledge and has expressed the opinion that the human mind is like a fishing-net which can give us only such part or aspects of reality as it is capable of knowing. The Nobel Prize winner Werner Heisenberg, who more than any other physicist of the day, is said to have the right to wear Einstein's mantle, has recently said: 'We stand in the centre of the confrontation between nature and man, of which science, of course, is only a part. The familiar classification of the world into subject and object, inner and outer world, body and soul, somehow, no longer quite applies, and indeed, leads to difficulties. In science, also, the object of research is no longer nature in itself, but rather nature exposed to man's questioning, and to this extent, man here also meets himself.'[5]

It is clear from the above that, in our knowledge of the external world, even in our scientific knowledge thereof, we do not get reality in its complete and unconditioned objectivity. Such an objectivity is a will-o'-the-wisp. This is not to deny that there *is* an objective reality. The Advaita Vedānta does not. Brahman, says the Advaitin, is the ever-abiding, inexpugnable, objective Reality which *we*, in our relative, everyday experience perceive *as the world.* What we are perceiving when we are said to be perceiving the world is Brahman, conditioned by space-time-causation, not Brahman in its unconditioned nature. 'The world' says Śaṅkara, the paragon of Advaita philosophers, 'is an unbroken series of perceptions of Brahman, hence it is nothing but Brahman in all respects—*Brahmapratyayasantatirjagad ato brahmaiva tat sarvataḥ*' (*Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 521). Again and again, Śaṅkara writes in his commentaries that Brahman is the *adhiṣṭhāna, āspada,* and *kāraṇa,* that is, the objective basis and ground of the world-experience, and he is never tired of reiterating his theory of *ananyatva* or non-difference of the world from Brahman. Without something *being there,* without an objective reality, no experience whatsoever, he says, not even that of a mirage or an optical illusion, is possible. 'Without objective bases, even such perceptions such as that of the snake in the rope and the mirage etc. are not ever possible by anyone.'[6] Śaṅkara's scathing criticism of the Buddhist schools of subjective idealism or mentalism (Vijñānavāda), nihilism (Śūnyavāda)[7], and momentariness (Kṣaṇikavāda) in his commentaries on the *Brahma-Sūtra* ought to convince any critic of the distinction of his own position from these schools of thought. To say that the world according to Advaita Vedānta is an 'illusion' or a 'Cosmic Illusion' or anything of the sort is the darkest travesty of the Advaita position. Swami Vivekananda, the modern compeer in Advaita Vedānta of the illustrious Śaṅkara, says: 'This world is "the evolution of nature and the manifestation of God". It is our interpretation of Brahman or the Absolute, seen through the veil of Māyā or appearance. The world is not zero, it has a certain reality; it only *appears* because Brahman *is.*'[8] The following are some other statements of Vivekananda on the point:

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[5] Quoted by Eugene Exman in 'Search for Meaning' in the *Hibbert Journal,* July 1962, p. 276.

[6] *Māṇḍūkya Kārikā, Bhāṣya,* I.6.

[7] It may be pointed out here that Śaṅkara understood Śūnyavāda as literally 'nihilism', though, the philosophy, as developed by Nāgārjuna and other Mādhyamika philosophers, is not just that. We are concerned here with Śaṅkara's criticism of the nihilist position as such.

[8] *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,* Vol, VIII, pp. 3-4,

'Almost all of you have heard of the word *māyā*. Generally, it is used, though incorrectly, to denote illusion, or delusion, or some such thing.'[9]

'When the Hindu says the world is *māyā*, at once, people get the idea that the world is an illusion. This interpretation has some basis, as coming through the Buddhistic philosophers, who did not believe in the external world at all. But the Māyā of the Vedānta, in its developed form, is neither Idealism nor Realism, nor is it a theory. It is a simple statement of facts—what we are and what we see around us.'[10]

'Most of you are by this time familiar with the idea of *māyā*, and know that it is sometimes erroneously explained as illusion, so that when the universe is said to be *māyā*, that also has to be explained as being illusion. The translation of the word is neither happy nor correct.'[11]

The Advaitin, also, does not regard the waking world as on a par with the dream world. The reader may refer to Śaṅkara's commentary on *Brahma-Sūtra* (II.2.29) where Śaṅkara has argued the point that the contents of the waking state cannot be regarded as similar to those of the dream state—*na svapnādi-pratyayavajjāgratpratyayā bhavitumarhanti. ... vaidharmyaṁ hi bhavati svapnajāgaritayoḥ.*

The illusionist interpretation of the Advaita position, therefore, which is, in fact, a misinterpretation, should be done away with and the world being *māyā* should, correctly speaking, be understood to mean 'relative experience' or 'conditioned experience' of Reality which the Vedāntin calls Brahman. But with this, we have not removed all the moss that covers the limpid waters of the Advaita. There is the much discussed, and I am afraid, much misunderstood, question of the reality and status of God in Advaitavāda. The usual misunderstanding is that God in the Advaita system is illusory or phenomenal or is a reality different from, and 'lower' than, that of the Absolute. This Absolute is conceived as Nirguṇa Brahman, a thin abstraction of thought, devoid of all qualities and features and incapable of receiving and responding to the warmth of devotion of the worshipper, thus cutting the very roots of all religious feeling and devotional fervour. This misunderstanding takes our breath away. The Advaitin never regards Nirguṇa and Saguṇa Brahman as numerically two different entities, but simply as two forms or aspects of the selfsame Brahman, the Unconditioned and the Conditioned. 'Brahman has a twofold nature', writes Śaṅkara, 'the one as conditioned by the limiting adjuncts of name and form; and the other, shorn of all limiting adjuncts ... The texts of the Śruti speak of the two forms of Brahman, the one the object of *vidyā* and the other the object of *avidyā*.'[12] Brahman in the context of the relational universe is God, the ruler and controller of the universe and the object of devotion, and religious life retains its full validity prior to the transcendence of the relational consciousness. Is not Śaṅkara the composer of so many devotional hymns of surpassing beauty which millions of devotees in India sing every day?

Again, Brahman is *nirguṇa*, not in the sense of being *devoid* of or *depleted* of every quality, but in the sense of exceeding every conceivable quality. It is that inexhaustible positivity 'through which all concepts burst'. Again and again, Śaṅkara writes in his commentaries that Brahman, being the Infinite and the All, the One without a second, cannot be categorized by any of the four basic categories of our finite understanding—*jāti* (class), *guṇa* (quality), *kriyā* (activity), and *sambandha* (relation). Under what class can the Infinite be subsumed? What will be its distinguishing quality, since there is nothing else besides it to be distinguished from? Where is the space for the Infinite to move to and from? To what can the Infinite be related?

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[9] *Ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 88.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 89.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

[12] *Brahma-Sūtra Bhāṣya*, I.1.11.

Otto has beautifully explained the relation of Saguṇa to Nirguṇa Brahman in Śaṅkara's thought by comparing the two conceptions to the two ways of describing Godhead by the Western mystics, the *via eminentiae* and the *via negationis*. The former is the way of expressing Godhead in the highest terms of absolute perfection conceivable by man, and the latter is the way of describing Him by negative predicates with the object of excluding all limited determinations. The latter does not indicate impoverishment or emptiness, but the continuation of the former to its highest point. 'The case is very similar with Śaṅkara. When this relationship is understood, one is no longer perplexed by his apparent "confusion". The method which he uses is really that of *samuccaya* (summing up) with regard to the Saguṇa and the Nirguṇa Brahman. Only thus is he comprehensible and, from this point, the confusion in his writings is solved. Śaṅkara can employ this method quite consistently, for the term "nothing" which the mystic uses of God is the superlative exaltation of the Divine above all "something". In like manner, Śaṅkara's *nirguṇatvam* is the superlative of *saguṇatvam*. The former does not deny the latter, but the latter is taken up in the former. Therefore, Śaṅkara can justifiably pass from the standpoint of the *parāvidyā* to that of the *aparāvidyā* and *vice versa* a hundred times, until the distinctions between them are completely obliterated. (Eckhart does exactly the same.) The significance of this process of *samuccaya* is, obviously, to assure to the highest Brahman all the conceivable divine values of theism and include them in the conception of the Brahman. ... Therefore, when Śaṅkara employs for his Brahman the terms of honour which, strictly speaking, belong only to a world-creating and world-transcendent God, it is not a question of accommodation, but is the very essence of his position.'[13]

Śrī Rāmānuja's description of Brahman as 'Puruṣottama who is by nature free from all defects and is the abode of unlimited and innumerable auspicious qualities of the highest order'[14] is Brahman's description *via eminantiae*. The Advaitin is *not opposed* to this, but he would find its consummation in the description *via negationis* (the *neti neti* method of the Śruti). Said Swami Vivekananda: 'The Impersonal instead of doing away with the personal, the Absolute instead of pulling down the relative, only explains it to the full satisfaction of our reason and heart. The Personal God and all that exists in the universe are the same Impersonal Being seen through our minds. When we shall be rid of our minds, our little personalities, we shall become one with It.'[15]

Seen in the proper perspective, the Advaita idea of Nirguṇa Brahman, far from being a thin abstraction of thought, will be found to be the most rational idea of God, freed from all vestiges of relativism and anthropomorphism, the Glory beyond all glories which no image can express—*na tasya pratimā asti yasya nāma mahadyaśaḥ*. The final consummation of all our religious and spiritual life is the realization of our identity with That.

The ultimate destiny of man according to Advaita and the meaning of his spiritual evolution could not be expressed better than in the simple and lucid words of Vivekananda: 'The finite, manifested man forgets his source and thinks himself to be entirely separate. We, as personalized, differentiated beings, forget our reality, and the teaching of Monism is not that we shall give up these differentiations, but we must learn to understand what they are. We are in reality that Infinite Being, and our personalities represent so many channels through which this Infinite Reality is manifesting Itself; and the whole mass of changes which we call evolution is brought about by the soul trying to manifest more and more of its infinite energy. We cannot stop anywhere on this side of the Infinite; our power, and blessedness, and wisdom, cannot but grow into the Infinite. Infinite power and existence and blessedness are ours, and we have not to acquire them; they are our own, and we have only to manifest them.'[16]

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[13] Otto: *Mysticism East and West*, Meridian Books, New York, 1957, p. 112.

[14] *Śrī-Bhāṣya*, I.1.1.

[15] *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. II, pp. 336-37.

This, indeed, is the central teaching of the Advaita as philosophy or theory of reality and as religion in the sense of the highest spiritual status and freedom man is capable of attaining. We may call it philosophy or not, religion or not, in the usual acceptation of the meanings of these terms; India has given to this 'wisdom uncreate' the name of Vedānta, which literally means the *terminus ad quem* of all knowledge.

What is the bearing of this Vedānta on the practical problems of life and on our outlook on life? The reader is solicited to read and re-read Vivekananda's lectures on Practical Vedānta for an answer to this question. It was Vivekananda's genius to have pointed out in a forceful and convincing manner how Vedānta is capable of practical application in all departments of life. It is gross misconception of Vedānta to think that it disparages a healthy outlook on life. The truth is quite the reverse of it. 'The Vedānta' as Vivekananda said, 'does not, in reality, denounce the world. The ideal of renunciation nowhere attains such a height as in the teachings the Vedānta. But, at the same time, d suicidal advice is not intended; it real means deification of the world—giving up th world as we think of it, as we know it, as i appears to us—and to know what it really is. Deify it; it is God alone.'[17]

There will be, as there always are, man philosophies in the philosophical landscap of the world; the Advaita may not be the o universally acceptable philosophy, but wh can be confidently asserted is this that i times to come, a considerable section of thinking humanity will turn to Advaita Vedānta a the most logically consistent system of philosophy and religion of the loftiest kind.

Do we want to unite all mankind into o brotherhood and usher in an era of peace a fraternity, of unprecedented inter-national c operation for the advancement of science a art, religion and philosophy, and all that i worthy of man at his best? Then, no ma political measure will ever achieve this. Th Advaita alone provides the strongest me physical foundation for solid world brothe hood, and the bending of human energies f the realization of Oneness taught by th Advaita can alone be 'a heroic substitute f war', which is our highest desideratum in th uneasy world of today.

Let us follow the trail blazed b Vivekananda.

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[16] *Ibid.*, p. 337.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 146.

> I may make bold to say that the only religion which agrees with, and even goes a little further than modern researches, both on physical and moral lines, is the Advaita. ... When atheists and agnostics had destroyed the nation, it was found out that Advaita was the only way to save India from materialism. Materialism prevails in Europe today. The salvation of Europe depends on a rationalistic religion, and Advaita is the only religion that can have any hold on any intellectual people.
>
> SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SCIENCE, PROGRESS, AND VALUE

By Swami Adidevananda

[Swami Adidevananda is the Head of the Mangalore centre of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. In this article, he deals with the various notions prevalent about the meaning of progress and says that, though we should not overlook the necessity of science and technology, true progress is to be measured in terms of the eternal values. Swami Vivekananda has said that all healthy progress really means the 'manifestation of spiritual forces working within'.]

Science, technology, and progress are the *clichés* of our era; the first two are supposed to lead us to the last, which is the goal. We speak of progress, but what exactly do we mean by progress? It is not easy to define. There are people who measure progress by human inventions—television, ballistic missiles, space capsules, etc. A scientific humanist believes that the goal of human happiness can be realized only by means of social advance, unaided by any higher power. A classical humanist, on the other hand, thinks of history as the spirit of man groping its way towards Beauty and Good, while a religious thinker seeks his centre and end in God. There are other self-centred nondescript groups whose conceptions of progress need not be taken into serious consideration. It is difficult to define a single universal purpose which will reconcile conflicting claims. Some achievements of modern science have, undoubtedly, done good, and some harm. Our triumph over nature has immensely increased our servitude. We are utterly helpless without gadgets and appliances. While modern science and technology have integrated the world on a physical plane, the psychic barrier between man and man, nation and nation, has widened to an astonishing degree. Material wealth and spiritual poverty co-exist, throwing gloomy shadows.

The blind forces of variation and selection might have brought about the progress from amoebic life to conscious man, but we are not sure today if human will, in its present *milieu*, can bring about far more rapid progress in the future. Human history seems to defy the predetermined pattern or rhythm of thinkers. As if to aggravate the issue, the second world war and its aftermath, in spite of the scientific and technological progress, have disturbed the idea of world peace or consciousness.

When a governing power attempts to commit a nation to secularism (whatever might be its secondary or figurative meaning), it is giving expression to the spiritual crisis that has overtaken its intellectuals and leaders. We are unaware of the depth of crisis in this superficial age. This open denial of spiritual values is, perhaps, a good thing. We stand face to face with the final question of our destiny. Now, once more, the time has come to look inward amidst the pathless jungle of our external progress and assess the conscious element amidst inert and mechanical forces of nature.

Man is a strange amalgam of divine and non-divine, and possesses the capacity for good or evil, for progress or retrogression. If he completely lacked the divine spark, the world would be far worse than what it is; if his nature was wholly spiritual, there would not be any temporal process of history. He has complete freedom to rise vertically to the realm of ideals or move horizontally in time and age without any transcendence. He must clearly find out his true thoughts and feelings, ideals and aspirations. Will he choose selfishness which invites his destruction or purposively go upward to attain the pitch of perfection? He must know the end he is aiming at. He can, if he chooses, advance to his goal by his knowledge of himself. Self-knowledge is not only knowledge of Self, but also discriminative awareness of one's thoughts, feelings, and will. He must have a *weltanschauung* which will expand his heart, mind, and will. Man, with all his external professions, is still in his primitive state with the outlook and cravings of a cave-dweller. He has changed in his food and dress habits only, without a corresponding change within.

It cannot be denied that modern man is confronted with certain genuine difficulties with regard to progress and perfection. To put the issue bluntly, he is haunted by the question: What is the use of progress or perfection if our end is ultimate extinction? There is no meaning in striving, if there is no higher value which satisfies human aspirations. When the ancient teachers spoke of the transcience of mortal existence or its vanities, they were dismissed as sentimental pessimists; but by a strange irony, the scientist has usurped the place of the prophet. According to Sir James Jeans, the well-known astronomer-philosopher, the second law of thermodynamics suggests that the world is heading towards a 'heat death'. So, the result of the victory of sciences is no longer a pleasing tale. Those who do not want to be frightened or haunted by the ultimate extinction require a metaphysical basis even for the fulfilment of humanistic values, let alone higher values.

The problems mentioned above are due to wrong understanding or interpretation of the term 'progress'. Progress is possible on two levels: the material and the spiritual; the former deals with temporal objects and the latter with perennial values. Material progress refers to the discovery of the mysteries of physical laws, and spiritual progress refers to psychological awareness in the depth of one's being. The one has for its goal the fulfilment of human desires through human effort, and the other the conquest of human infirmities, aided by higher powers. The one aims at the liberation of man on the physical level, and the other at the salvation of man on a spiritual level. One who has attained perfection within temporal limits may be unprogressive when compared to the other who has triumphed over historical processes, independent of time or age. Worldly progress is dubitative attainment, whereas spiritual progress leaves indelible marks on the person who attains it. Spiritual realization is a unique experience cutting across historical barriers. The rise of Jesus in a Judaic milieu, superimposed by Greco-Roman leavening, is a wonderful instance of transcendence, independent of time or age. Spiritual realization is validated, not within the time order, but in a higher and timeless plane. The divine author of the *Gītā* tells us in his own telling phrase that what is night for all beings is day for the realized soul; he who has reached this stage is deluded no longer and is liberated in this life itself. 'Good and evil cannot bind him who has realized the oneness of the Nature and his own Self with Brahman', says Sri Ramakrishna.

Biologists tell us that matter has evolved into life with regulating mechanisms compared with which our most intricate tools are simple. Through evolution the living matter has acquired possibilities of experience and knowledge of control. Though the life of prehistoric man has been brutish, there has been an advance in moral sphere as well. The Vedāntic seers of India have given a new orientation to the concept of evolution from the earliest times. They have seen a common purpose running through all the stages of evolution: the return of the soul to its original source or essence. To them, the universe of experience is a vast field, where the soul is to rise to greater heights of awareness by controlling the nature within and without. The idea of true evolution is brought out in the dialogue between Bhṛgu and Varuṇa in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*: There is logical and psychological progression from matter to life, from life to mind, from mind to self-consciousness, and from self-consciousness to transcendental bliss. The line of progress and perfection is reflected in the very nature of evolution. The imprisoned ray penetrates the opaque lead-walls of body and mind and reaches its end. Man, in other words, becomes superman when his psycho-somatic sheath is invaded by the Spirit. 'From the dark I go to the varicoloured. ... Shaking off evil, as a horse his hairs, shaking off the body, as the moon releases itself from the mouth of Rāhu, I, a perfected soul, pass into eternal Brahman-world—yea, into it I pass' (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VIII. 13) is the poem of the perfected soul.

According to this vision of progress, the Upaniṣadic thinkers looked upon every ascent or progress in human history as a phase in the attainment of perfection. They judged the progress of evolution—not in terms of inventions and achievements from agriculture to anaesthetics—but in terms of the degree of the conquest of spirit over matter. Apart from this, they held that the creation has no meaning or purpose, whatever might be the knowledge of achievement and control. They never gave inordinate importance to material prosperity or the life of the senses in the scheme of life. Vālmīki has pictured in telling language the cultures of Ayodhyā and Laṅkā. The culture of Laṅkā, high as it was, evoked no sympathy from Vālmīki. Moral consciousness was the criterion he employed in the valuation of civilizations. Moral and spiritual values were the basis on which Śrī Rāma built his administration without allowing evil to grow under his feet. He was the true philosopher-king to whom the goal of life was the attainment of spiritual perfection. This perfection will not come from outside adventitiously, but is in a potential form in every being at every level. Though it may not be manifest on the face of it, its manifestation would constitute the goal of life. When this spiritual awareness invades the minds of human beings, what is called Rāmarājya is established.

It is interesting to note how the Indian thinkers tried to impress the perennial values, which they intuited in the noumenon, on the plane of space-time and history and on the pattern of individual and social life. Even the so-called caste system was conceived on the principle of spiritual progress. The place people occupied in society was proportionate to the degree of their spiritual progress. Similarly, they tried to prescribe graded discipline for individuals through the scheme of four *āśramas*. Though they held 'infinity in the palm of hand', they did not ignore social progress from the spiritual angle. Time is transient and all things connected with it are transient, too. In this passing show of ephemeral values, there are a few that do not pass away, but endure. The reality of spiritual values remain unaffected by the changes of historical and cosmic processes. The Indian sages viewed all the human institutions as vehicles of values, but distinct from the value itself. Though the pot is broken, the space within the pot in unaffected. When the purpose of life is achieved, all the human agencies which were once useful as means are wound up.

From what has been said above, it is easy to see that scientific or material progress does not constitute spiritual progress. It must be distinguished from the false notion of progress. Its special characteristic is that it emancipates man from all subtle psychic bondages. It is rather difficult to judge what is good and bad in the relative historical plane, where time is a vehicle of ephemeral values. From the standpoint of ultimate Reality, what is ancient is not necessarily imperfect and what is modern may not be good or perfect at all. That is how the sayings of ancient teachers carry, even in the present time, an element of eternity, and have a message for all time. But it is left to each generation to discover its own means to realize the reality of spiritual life amid the confusing din and bustle created by false prophets.

Strangely enough, science and progress, the two characteristics of our age, seem to be hostile to spiritual progress. Though science has changed the world externally, has emancipated men from drudgery by means of machinery, and has built an industrial society, it has not freed man from primeval instincts and tribal religion, which are antagonistic to higher values. A superstitious mind is the fertile ground to generate spiritual blindness, whatever may be its insight into the mysteries of nature. The mechanical progress has, indeed, mechanized the mind, drying, as it were, its creative potency. Science has become an end in itself, and has contributed little for the cultivation of imperishable values like truth, justice, non-violence, dignity of the individual, etc. If it had offered opportunity for spiritual development, the world would not have been divided into warring camps, each threatening the total extinction of the other. Industrialization has brought new problems, while the old problems remain unsolved. It has accentuated the difference between the employer and the employee, the rich and the poor. Simple peasants find it easy and tempting to migrate to the towns, neglecting agriculture and other useful crafts. Unable to imitate the rich, but inordinately craving to fulfil creature comforts, they have become victims of psychosomatic diseases. These neo-workers, who are uprooted from their moorings, would rather wallow in dirty slums with its drabness and monotony than return to their old places and productive work. The ancient kings seem to be less cruel and tyrannous when compared to the modern despots in farms and factories, in offices and laboratories.

While spiritual discipline has always laid emphasis on the control of desires and passions, material life tends to increase our wants and cravings. If there is large-scale production of some article, the entire advertisement machinery is geared to persuade the consumer to buy the goods with all sorts of lies and temptations. When unnecessary needs multiply, we delude ourselves by saying that the standard of life has risen. The ambition of powerful nations to form themselves into common economic markets to control the less favoured and developing nations has become a menace to humanity. The world has become a market of greed with conflicting ideologies.

It is unfortunate that we are unable to see the difference between outward success and inward success. A man may be hailed as most successful by press and radio, yet he knows in the depths of his mind how barren and false has been his inner life with its compromises and defects. Another may be considered as total failure by worldly standards, but may be rich in his inward life: He is not perturbed by adversity or prosperity and is free from desire, fear, and anger. He looks upon all beings as himself in pleasure and pain. We must be able to discover the subtle difference between culture and sensuality, the good and the pleasant, means and end, physical health and mental hygiene. Science and technology can create material comfort but not good life. They have annihilated time, but cannot tell man what he should do with his unearned leisure. Miracle drugs can drive out diseases, but cannot bestow mental health. While science gives us extraordinary power to control nature, it does not help us in controlling our emotions or thoughts. We must realize the limitation of science to get the vision of higher values. The present condition of the world facing thermo-nuclear war is a consequence of setting science higher than spiritual values. Our world can be compared to a jet plane hurtling through the space without any control.

A few words may be said about the place of philosophy in our life. A' glance at the current philosophical journals is sufficient to discourage even an enthusiast. Philosophy has been reduced to linguistic analysis and logical constructions. According to these over-intellectuals, all the philosophical problems are problems of language, and the philosopher does not, and cannot, discover anything about reality; he can, at best, analyse and clarify what is already known, in a confused manner. Philosophy has to be recued from its absurd role if it has to declare the truth of timeless values. 'A man with no philosophy', declares William James, the father of Pragmatism, 'is the most inauspicious and unprofitable of all possible social mates.' If such is the importance of philosophy, it must be restored to its pristine role so that we may derive integral understanding, a comprehensive interpretation of our experience and a total vision of the world.

It is said that science describes, while philosophy interprets. The special function of philosophy, according to this view, is to co-ordinate the other branches of knowledge, to interpret the data collected by science. Even this is not a satisfactory function of philosophy. If we have to assign secretariat work to philosophy, we would do well in giving a new name to this form of activity. The Indian philosophers did not define philosophy in this manner. To them, philosophy was synonymous with the means and ends of human life, human culture. Philosophy has direct bearing on life. It clarifies one's thought, destroys pride and prejudices, and helps in distinguishing the real from the unreal. While physical sciences deal with *ponderables*, philosophy deals with *imponderables* which cannot be weighed or measured by yardsticks and balances. This is a unique character and privilege of philosophy. As dealing with those that cannot be estimated, it opens up a new vista, *a priori* knowledge. The philosopher of today should not live in the present alone. He must connect the past with the present and future, if he has to make any sense out of the confused historical processes. Decrying the past is as irrational as denying the present or the future; for higher values do not change with the passing stream of time.

It is sufficiently made clear from what has been said as to what we mean by the term progress. Now, a few words, by way of conclusion, may be said as to its way. According to Vedānta, progress is the manifestation of the perfection of the Ātman, the Self within. This notion of progress implies both the perfection of the individual and the nation. 'All healthy social changes are the manifestations of the spiritual forces working within,' says Swami Vivekananda, 'and if these are strong and well adjusted, society will arrange itself accordingly.' When the individuals are raised, the nation is bound to rise. This perfection must go on expanding till the cosmic purpose is fulfilled. We do not, and cannot, know the finale of the cosmic purpose; our duty is to strive and go forward without thinking of the consequences or the end. The spiritual progress of the individual, no less than the nation, is to be measured in terms of truth, non-violence, and beauty. We have to cling to these immortal values without losing our strength and manliness, propriety and perspective, at a time when might seems to be right. And let us not forget what Swami Vivekananda warned about progress in India: He said that it lay between the Scylla of old orthodoxy and Charybdis of European civilization. We have to avoid both the monster and the whirlpool if we have to proceed in the path of true spiritual progress.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION

(A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE ACTIVITIES)

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

[Swami Vireswaranandaji Maharaj is the General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. This article is a brief review of the activities of the Organization, the visible symbol of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda and the ideals they lived and worked for.]

The Ramakrishna Movement was initiated by the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna soon after his passing away in 1886. It was inspired by his life and teachings and worked out chiefly by his monastic disciples. Swami Vivekananda, however, gave to this movement a more practical shape in 1897, on his return from the West.

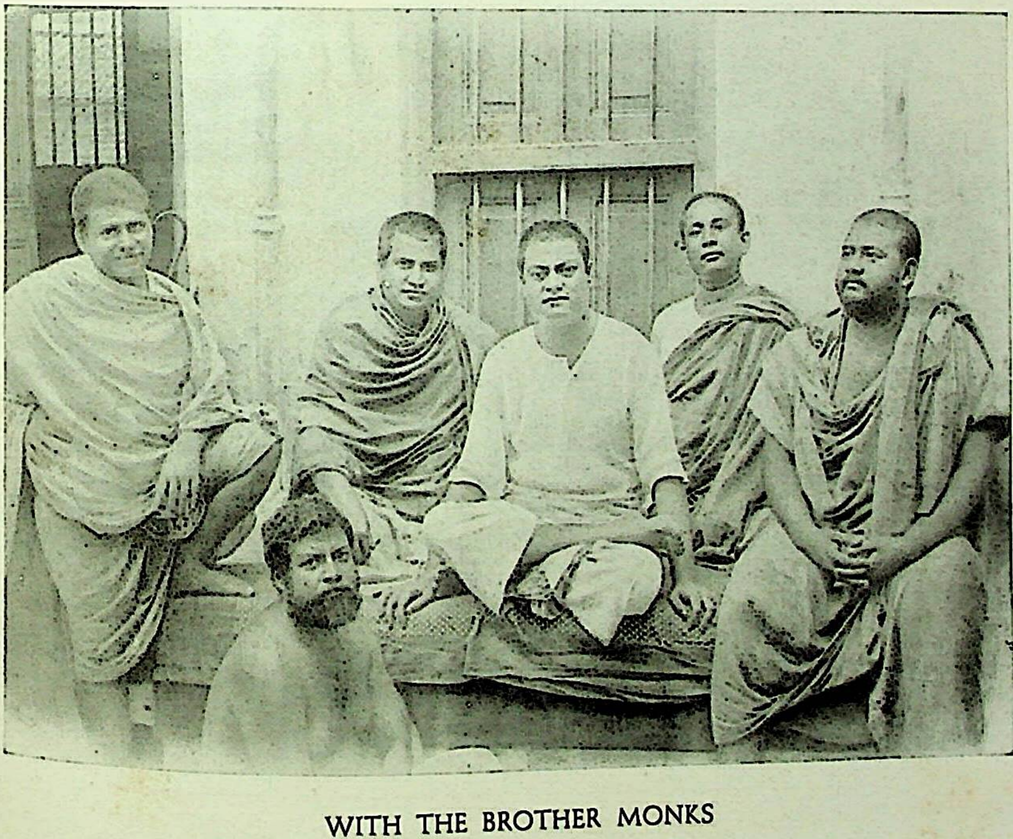
Sri Ramakrishna (1836-86) was born in a distant village of Bengal; and early in life, he became the priest of the Kālī temple at Dakshineshwar, a beautiful spot on the Gaṅgā, some four miles north of Calcutta. He had great love for God from his very childhood; and this led him, now that he was placed in favourable environment, to make an intense search for Him. Through an intense longing to see God and dispassion for things material, he, as it were, 'laid siege to the citadel of God and took it by storm' and attained God-vision. His entire life afterwards was lived in the highest plane of spiritual consciousness.

Sri Ramakrishna had realized Truth not only through the disciplines prescribed by Hinduism, but also through those prescribed by other religions, thereby proving by direct experience that all religions are true paths to God-realization. Such a bold assertion about the truths of all religious faiths was the greatest need of the age. It infused new life into religion, and what appeared to be mere superstition so long acquired significance. Through his variegated spiritual experiences, he arrived at a synthetic harmony that reconciled all conflicting views of life and religion. To him, all beings were little bits of that infinite God-head; and his love, therefore, was all-inclusive, irrespective of creed, race, or nationality. Today, this soul is worshipped in India and abroad spiritual luminary of the first magnitude the great saviours of the past.

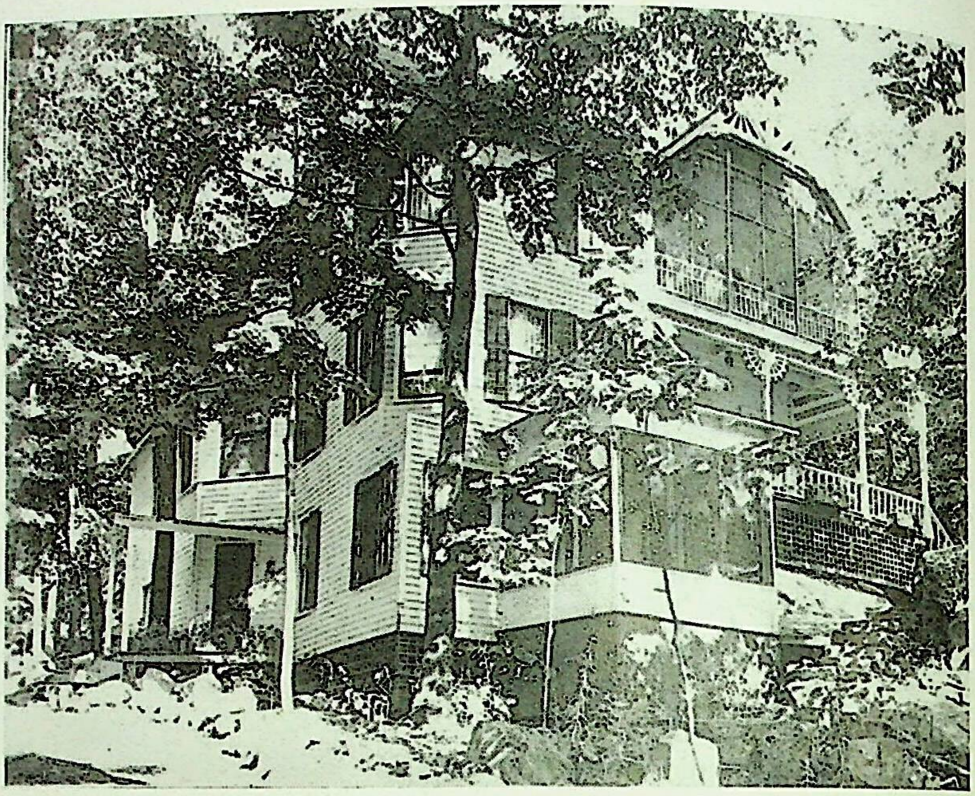
THE RAMAKRISHNA ORDER

During the last few years of Sri Ra krishna's life, many sincere and yearning had come to him attracted by his spiritual With great care and love, he trained the disciples, a good number of whom later braced the monastic life, true to the of renunciation he had infused in the Foremost amongst them was Swami Vi nanda. After the passing away of the Ma the Swami travelled all over India, lea the life of an itinerant monk; and in travels, he saw with his own eyes the able plight of his motherland steeped in or, poverty, and ignorance. He was with a fervour to uplift his motherland; with this object in view, he crossed the and went to the United States of Ame There he represented Hinduism at the ment of Religions held in Chicago in His interpretation of Hinduism impressed lightened Americans of various walks of and all earnest seekers of Truth were dra him. For four years, he preached the truths of the Vedānta in U.S.A. and Eu which the Westerners were sorely in need And these years of his life in the West him an opportunity to study the good weak points in the Western nations; and comparison and contrast with his own land, he realized the greatness of Indi

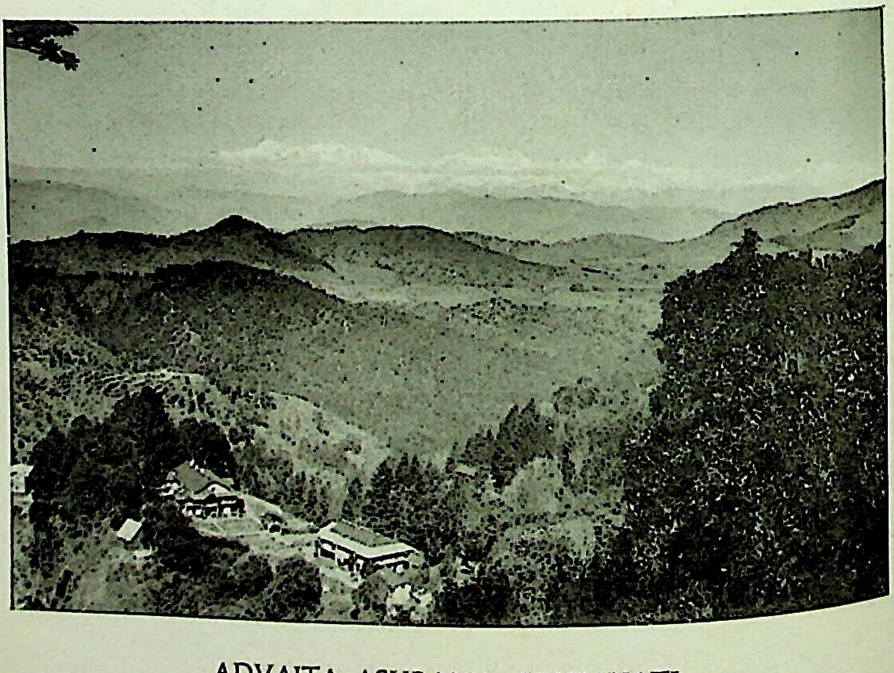
THE MONASTERY AT BELUR
Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission



WITH THE BROTHER MONKS
(Calcutta, February 1901)



THOUSAND ISLAND PARK
(where Swamiji gave his 'Inspired Talks' and composed 'The Song of the Sannyasin')



ADVAITA ASHRAMA, MAYAVATI

many fundamental things. But he had also realized that there was much superstition, poverty, and ignorance in this country.

On his return from the West, the Swami formulated for the monks of the Ramakrishna Order the true significance of the monk's life in one pithy sentence, 'For one's own liberation and for the good of the world'. He admonished them to give up the selfish idea of leading the life of a recluse and to dedicate themselves to the service of others, to see God in the sick, the poor, and the ignorant and render service, as worship, to this God in man. With this angle of vision, he asked them to distribute spiritual, intellectual, and material food, according to the needs of the sufferer. The stress was on God-realization. Such a *sādhanā* or spiritual practice was presented as on a par with the traditional disciplines. Social service was, as it were, a byproduct of this divine worship. The Swami's message, therefore, cannot be evaluated in terms of philanthropy or social service, for fundamentally it is a spiritual one. This service to man, seeing the God in him, is the Swami's greatest gift to the modern world of strife, competition, and war.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

On May 1, 1897, Swami Vivekananda had established an association called the Ramakrishna Mission Association to unite the lay and monastic followers of the Master in a common organized effort for the service of humanity. After the starting of the Belur Math in 1899, this association ceased to function as an independent organization, and the Math itself carried on the preaching, educational, and philanthropic activities. With the extension of the activities, it was found necessary to have a separate organization for better facilities of work and more efficient management of the activities. It was also found necessary to give the organization a legal status. So, in 1909, a society under the name of the Ramakrishna Mission was registered under Act XXI of 1860. The management of the Mission is vested in a Governing Body consisting of the Trustees of the Belur monastery for the time being. This Governing Body is responsible to the Association, consisting of lay and monastic members. Everyone who has full sympathy for the objects of the Mission, and is prepared to accept all religions as paths to God and live in peace and fellowship with the followers of all religions, is eligible to become a member of the Mission. The Mission membership today includes men and women of various religious faiths and nationalities. The branch centres of the Mission, spread all over India and abroad, are under the control of the Governing Body, though often placed under the management of local committees, most of whose members and office-bearers are public men of the place. The principal workers of the Mission, however, are the monastic members of the Ramakrishna Order. They are helped by local friends and admirers. The activities of the Mission, which entail enormous expenditure—in 1961-1962 it was about 1·5 crores for its permanent activities alone—are maintained by subscriptions and donations from the general public as well as grants from State and Central governments and public bodies. Funds earmarked for any purpose are spent for that particular purpose; and funds of the branches are exclusively used for the welfare of the respective branch centres towards the promotion of their various activities. The branches and headquarters publish periodical—mostly annual—reports of their activities along with the accounts which are audited by certified auditors appointed by the Association in their General Meeting. The Mission renders service irrespective of caste, creed, colour, position, or nationality.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MATHS

These are monasteries devoted to religious study, worship, meditation, and preaching. They, like the Mission centres, are scattered all over India and abroad. The monks of the

Ramakrishna Order get their spiritual training in these monasteries. The Ramakrishna Maths affiliated to the Belur Math, started by Swami Vivekananda in 1899, are under the control of the Board of Trustees of the Belur Math, with its headquarters at the latter place. All the Maths have temples or chapels, where the presiding deity is Sri Ramakrishna. These Maths are financed by friends and devotees. When the Math centres carry on activities of the kind undertaken by the Mission, they, too, get help from the general public, and grants from the government and public bodies. The Math funds are also audited by certified auditors approved by the Trustees.

The above distinction between the Math and the Mission proper is only a technical one; and the two sister institutions are by no means water-tight compartments, being placed as they are under the management of the same group of monks, the Trustees and Governing Body members, respectively, of the two institutions. There are, again, many centres which are combined Math and Mission centres, and again, there are purely Math centres carrying on activities of the kind undertaken by the Mission. For these reasons, it is very difficult to review their activities separately.

The activities of the Math and Mission in India can be broadly divided into three groups: (a) Spiritual and Cultural, (b) Educational, and (c) Philanthropic.

SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL

The Math and Mission centres, specially the former, spread the spiritual teachings and cultural ideals as illustrated in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. This is done through public lectures and classes, birthday celebrations of the Master and other great incarnations and prophets, celebrations of Hindu festivities like the Durgā Pūjā, etc., running of reading rooms and public libraries, and the publication of religious literature and magazines. Some of the centres have published a good amount of literature in various provin languages, besides English, on the life a teachings of the Master and his disciples, a also translations of standard Sanskrit wo on philosophy and religion. It is notewort that, during the birth centenary year o Swami Vivekananda, the *Complete Works* o the Swami are being published in nine Indi languages. Apart from several periodi magazines brought out by the different educa tional institutions, eleven regular magazi are conducted, five in English (one each fr U.K. and U.S.A.), one in French from Gre and five in different Indian languages.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Education is not to be merely informati or practical and useful. The development o intellectual capacity alone will lead t nowhere. People who are all intellect, a nothing else, may not be quite welco members of any society, for without a fi moral foundation, such an intellect may b a danger to society. Nor can mere brai winning be the ultimate aim of educati Education, to be worth its name, must he one to build character and to be a good citi doing one's duty by one's fellowmen. 'Edu tion', as Swami Vivekananda put it, 'is t manifestation of the perfection already i man.' To attain this goal of education, li with the *guru* (teacher), as of old, is q essential. So, many of the Mission edu tional institutions are residential or partly and religious instruction forms an import feature in all of them. In addition to th college and school curricula, vocational tra ing in various arts and crafts, like cane-wo carpentry, weaving, leather-work, etc., i given to the students in most of these insti tions, specially in the residential ones. Sp and physical training are encouraged. I short, an attempt is made to help the stude manifest the perfection already in them b making the environments suitable for build a healthy body, a healthy intellect, and healthy mind.

In the education of girls, while all these ideals are stressed, particular care is taken to see that they imbibe all that is best in the Indian womanhood of the past, as seen in characters like Sītā, Sāvitrī, Mīrā Bāī, and others. Fine arts, domestic hygiene, cooking, etc. form part of their education.

During the year 1961-1962, the Math and Mission ran, in all, three general colleges at Madras, Belur (Howrah), and Narendrapur (Calcutta)—the last two being residential—with 1,815 students on their rolls; three B. T. colleges, with 235 students; two basic training schools at Perianaickenpalayam and Madras, with 73 boys and 179 girls respectively; three junior basic training colleges at Rahara, Sargachi, and Sarisha, with 196 boys and 57 girls; two colleges for physical education and rural higher education, and a school of agriculture, with 85,214 and 60 students respectively, at Perianaickenpalayam; two social education organizers' training centres there and at Belur, with 208 students; four engineering schools at Belur, Belgharia, Madras, and Perianaickenpalayam, with 1,327 students; eight junior technical or industrial schools, with 545 boys and 322 girls; 86 students' homes or hostels, including some orphanages, with 7,026 boys and 528 girls; three *catuṣpāṭhis*, with 57 students; twelve multipurpose higher secondary schools, with 4,449 boys and 952 girls; nine higher secondary schools with 2,925 boys and 2,246 girls; seventeen high and secondary schools, with 7,273 boys and 3,620 girls; twenty-four senior basic and M. E. schools, with 5,503 boys and 3,246 girls; twenty-nine junior basic and elementary schools, with 4,092 boys and 2,360 girls; sixty-five lower and other grades of schools, with 5,697 boys and 2,420 girls. The Sevapratishthan, Calcutta, and the Sevashrama, Rangoon, trained nurses, the number of trainees being 132. Thus, there were altogether 41,780 boys and 15,930 girls in the educational institutions run by the Math and Mission in India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Singapore, Fiji, and Mauritius.

During the birth centenary year of Swami Vivekananda, work is under way to start a university in the name of the Swami at Belur.

PHILANTHROPIC ACTIVITIES

Activities in this line are either permanent ones, or of a temporary nature. Under the first category come the hospitals, the dispensaries, the invalid homes, etc. Under the second category come all temporary relief works which are launched now and then, whenever there are famines, floods, fires, earthquakes, or outbreak of epidemics like cholera, smallpox, plague, etc. On such occasions, every monk who can possibly be released from his ordinary duties is moved to the scene of the catastrophe for rendering service to suffering humanity. The hospitals and dispensaries are called 'Sevashramas' or 'Homes of Service'. A good number of them are located in places of pilgrimage like Varanasi, Vrindaban, Hardwar, etc. and in the interior of the Himalayas and in distant villages. In large towns, such dispensaries render service to the poorer section of the people.

During 1961-1962, there were eleven indoor hospitals with 979 beds, which accommodated 22,157 patients, and 66 outdoor dispensaries, which treated 30,47,519 cases, including old ones. In these dispensaries, homoeopathic, ayurvedic, and allopathic systems of treatment are adopted, according to the needs of the patients. The indoor hospitals include the T. B. Sanatorium at Ranchi and the outdoor dispensaries include the T. B. Clinic at Delhi. At the Rangoon hospital, there is special provision for the treatment of cancer with radium and deep X-ray.

Work for Women: The Mission has ever been conscious of its duties to the women of India. Typical of the work done for them are the maternity section of the Seva Pratishthan, the Domiciliary and Maternity Clinic at Jalpaiguri, the women's sections of the hospitals at Varanasi, Vrindaban, and Rangoon, the attached Invalid Women's Home at Varanasi, the Nivedita Girls' School at Calcutta, the Sarada Vidyalaya at Madras, girls' high schools at Jamshedpur, the Sarada Mandir at Sarisha (24 Parganas), and so on. Besides, there are special arrangements for women in the other hospitals, dispensaries, and schools, and some institutions are conducted particularly for them.

Relief Works: After the independence of the country in 1947, the Government takes the initiative in starting relief measures wherever any calamities, natural or otherwise, take place. Therefore, the Mission's relief activities have occupied a secondary place in its scheme of work since 1947. In spite of this fact, the large-scale relief operations carried out by the Mission for the refugees from East and West Pakistan, following partition, need mention. During the year 1961-1962, the Math and Mission conducted flood relief in the Tanjore district of Madras, at Cranganore and Triprayar in Kerala, and in Barhiya thana in Bihar at a total expenditure of Rs. 49,000.

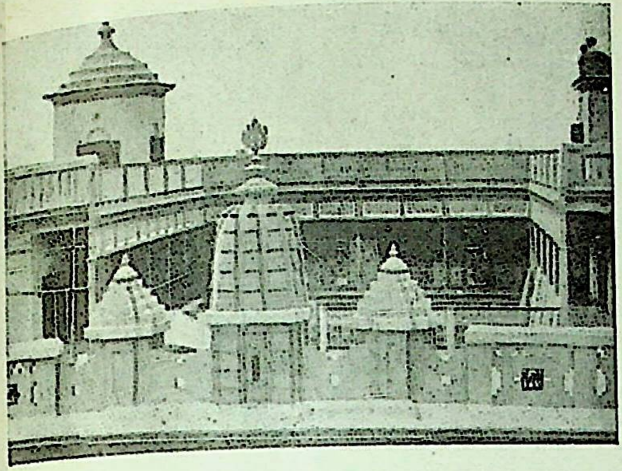
WORK OUTSIDE INDIA

Besides the centres in the West, engaged in the propagation of Vedānta, there are eleven Math and Mission centres in East Pakistan, two in Burma, one each in Singapore, Fiji, Mauritius, and Ceylon (with branches in the various parts of Ceylon). The work done by these centres is on the same lines as those of the Indian centres.

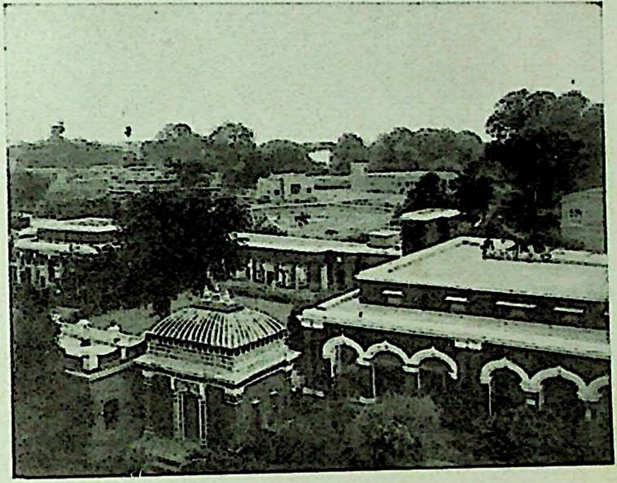
In other countries, there were fourteen centres in 1962—ten in U.S.A., one each in Argentina, England, France, and Switzerland. These centres are under the spiritual leadership of the monks of the Ramakrishna Order. These monks are sent to foreign lands at the
invitation of the local students of Ved
and devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. Thr
lectures, classes, and interviews, the Sw
preach the fundamentals of Vedānta
harmony of religions, as taught by S
Ramakrishna. They lay stress on the u
versal teachings of the Vedānta—the di
nature of man and the oneness of the univer
They do not attempt at converting people
the Hindu faith.

CONCLUSION

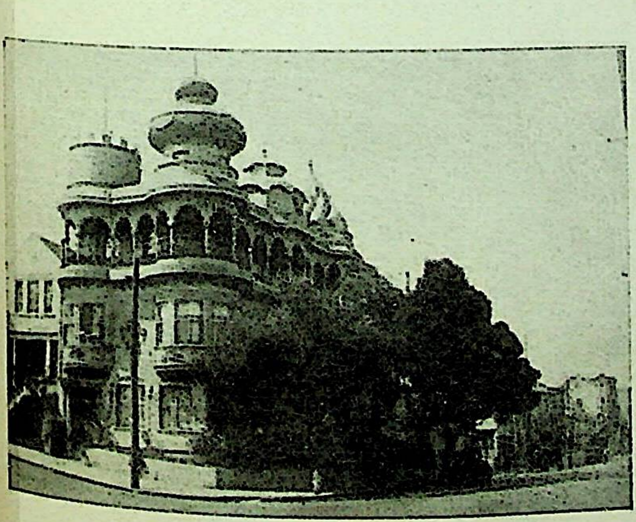
In March 1962, there were 73 Mi
centres, 65 Math centres, and 22 sub-cent
conducting permanent activities of vari
types. Thus it will be seen that the m
ment, inaugurated by the great Ma
Sri Ramakrishna, galvanized into an organi
tional force by the illustrious leader, Sw
Vivekananda, and strengthened and enlar
by his brother disciples, has crystallized t
into a dynamic institution, seeking in
humble way to mould the social and spirit
aspirations of humanity at large according
the concept of universal religion, as preach
and practised by these two prophets
modern age. Let us close this account w
the words of Professor Floyd H. Ross
the University of California, U.S.A., w
says: 'One of the most vital contempo
religious and educational movements in In
today is the Ramakrishna Movement. Un
the leadership of men trained in the spirit
Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, the Ra
krishna centres are living examples of how t
timeless truths of the past have value w
they are continuously relived and rein
preted in the present. The Ramakris
centres . . . are playing their own part qui
in helping to prepare the way for the uni
pilgrimage of mankind towards self-und
standing and peace.'



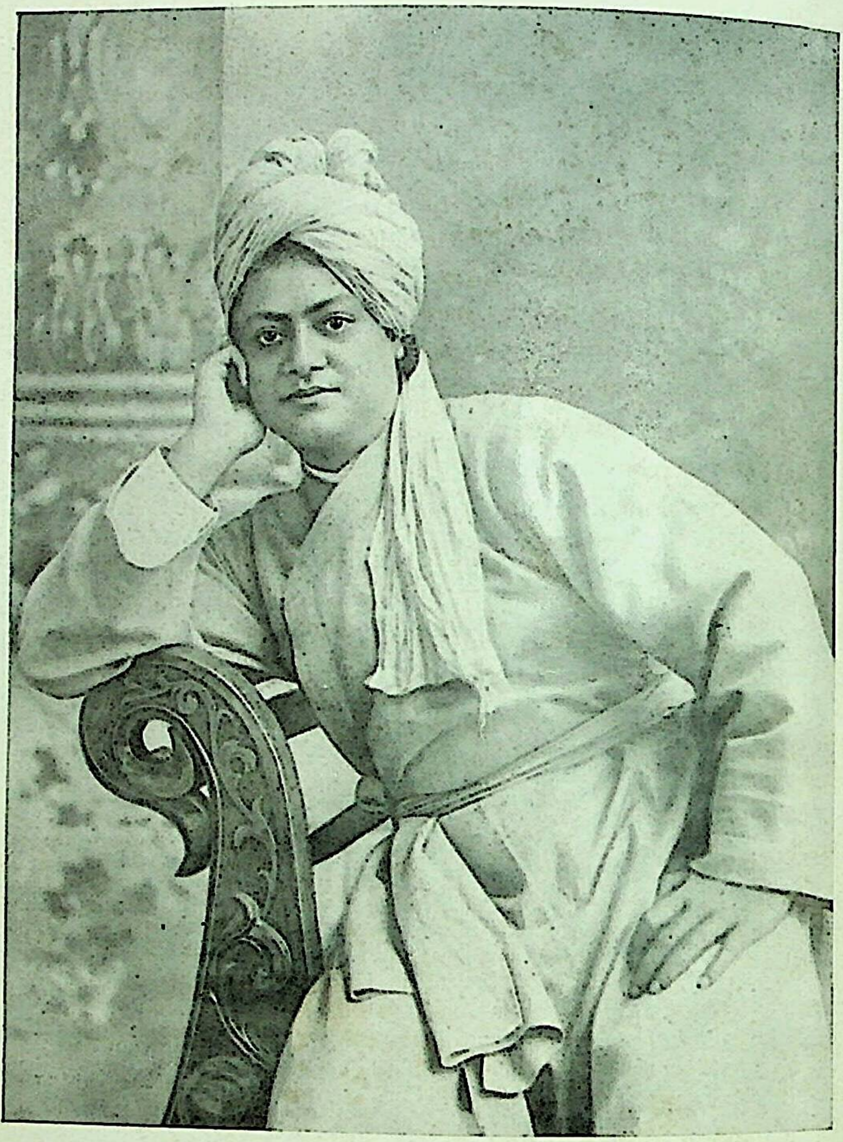
RAMAKRISHNA MISSION
SISTER NIVEDITA GIRLS' SCHOOL
CALCUTTA



RAMAKRISHNA MISSION
HOME OF SERVICE
VARANASI



THE HINDU TEMPLE
SAN FRANCISCO



(San Francisco, February 1900)

'One of them leaned forward and kissed the hem of the robe, murmuring brokenly in Spanish, "Humbre de Dios, Humbre de Dios !" (Man of God)'

Madame E. Calve

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

In the preceding few pages, we have made a humble effort to present the diverse aspects of the multi-sided personality of Swami Vivekananda, and of his work, in a comprehensive manner. The life and activity of Swami Vivekananda covered a wide ground. The Swami threw light on many problems of the day, not only of India, but of the world at large. The full extent of his influence and its future possibilities are still a matter of research for the coming generations. As a disciple has said: 'What amazed us was that he not only saw problems clearly but found solutions for them—solutions that were quite unique.' Our contributors have, in their respective articles, touched upon some of these problems, which are as pressing today as in Swamiji's days, and dealt with them in the light of his words. They have approached their task with the utmost devotion and humility, and have spared no pains to make their themes thorough, interesting, useful, and self-contained. And a word of praise is rightly due to them. But we are fully aware that there are still many things unsaid, and many others that cannot possibly be communicated through words. They have to be personally experienced by a devoted study of the Swami's life and works. If this special number should inspire and help our readers to do so, nothing more could be desired.

Much has been said, here and elsewhere, about the achievements of Swamiji that have made him world-famous. But Swamiji himself said once: 'If you really want to judge of the character of a man, look not at his great performances. Every fool may become a hero at one time or another. Watch a man do his most common actions; those are indeed the things which will tell you the real character of a great man. Great occasions rouse even the lowest of human beings to some kind of greatness, but he alone is the really great man whose character is great always, the same wherever he be.' We mention here a few incidents from Swamiji's life illustrative of this.

Swami Saradananda, whom Sri Ramakrishna considered as one of the ever-perfect souls, writes: 'No-one among us can stand any comparison with Swamiji. Let alone people like us, even Swami Brahmananda is of the same opinion. In fact, we were all pigmies beside Swamiji.' One thing that strikes us when we study Swamiji's life is that his spiritual greatness, acknowledged by all those who came in contact with him, did not sit heavily on him; it was so natural to him that he lived it unostentatiously. Swami Adbhutananda relates: 'When Swamiji returned from the West, he had with him Captain Sevier, Mr. Goodwin, and others. I went to see him, but was hesitant to meet him, thinking that he must have been puffed up with pride, now that he had some Western disciples. Swamiji read my feelings, and holding me by the hand, said: "You are still that brother Lato to me, and I am your brother Loren!" Then only I realized that Swamiji had acquired the power of knowing people's minds, and had not the least trace of egoism.' In another place he says: 'As soon as he returned from the West, he discarded his foreign suit, and started wearing a cheap cotton wrapper and a cheap pair of shoes. All the honour he had won he threw overboard.'

A Western devotee writes: 'Swamiji was so simple in his behaviour, so like one of the crowd, that he did not impress me so much when I first saw him. There was nothing about his ways that would mark him as the lion of New York society as so often he had been. Simple in dress and behaviour, he was just like one of us. He did not put himself aside on a pedestal as is so often the case with lionized personages. He walked about the room, sat on the floor, laughed, joked, chatted—nothing formal. Of course, I had noticed his magnificent, brilliant eyes, his beautiful features and majestic bearing, for these were parts of him that no circumstances could hide. But when I saw him for a few minutes, . . . it flashed into my mind: "What a giant, what strength, what manliness, what a personality! Every one near him looks so insignificant compared with him."'

Worldliness and spirituality are, no doubt, incompatible things and cannot co-exist. But a spiritual person need not necessarily be otherworldly, with no interest in the nobler joys of life or callous to the sufferings of others. If the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda have anything to teach us, it is this: A long-drawn face is no sign of spirituality. God is of the nature of bliss, and in religious life, which is communing with Him, there is no place for despondency and depression. That is why the Swami admonishes us: 'If you have a clouded face, do not go out that day; shut yourself up in your room. What right have you to carry this disease out into the world?' When somebody asked him: 'Swami, you are never serious?', he replied humorously: 'Yes, when I have a belly-ache!' 'One of the greatest things about Swami', writes Maud Stumm in her memoirs, 'was his human side. Like a big lovable boy, he thoroughly enjoyed the things he liked—ice-cream, for example. How many times I have seen him rise from the table after salad, excusing himself to smoke or walk, when a very quick word from Lady Betty that she believed there was to be ice-cream would turn him back instantly, and he would sink into his place with a smile of expectancy and pure delight, seldom seen on the face of anybody over sixteen. He just loved it, and he had all he wanted, too.'

'One day he told me', tells the same writer, 'that he wanted to undertake some sort of work that would keep his hands busy and prevent him from thinking of things that fretted him at that time—and would I give him drawing lessons? So materials were produced, and at an appointed hour he came, promptly, bringing to me, with a curi little air of submission, a huge red ap which he laid in my hands, bowing grav I asked him the significance of this gift, a he said, "in token that the lessons may fruitful"—and such a pupil as he proved be! Once only did I have to tell him a thing; his memory and concentration we marvellous, and his drawings strangely perf and intelligent for a beginner. By the ti he had taken his fourth lesson, he felt qu equal to a portrait; so . . . Turiyana posed, like any bronze image, and was dra capitally—all in the study of Mr. Legg with its divan for our seat, and its fine li to aid us. Many great ones may come that room in its future years, and prob will, but never again that childlike man, t ing over his crayons, with as single a mi and heart as if that were his vocation. H often he thanked me for the pleasure it ga him, and for the joy of learning, even that

With all this interest in life, how he f for the suffering humanity! Swami Abh nanda says: 'Whenever anyone came Swamiji with his sorrows, if Swamiji could nothing else, he would at least sing a f songs to assuage the sorrow.'

Many incidents are related about the l that existed between Sri Ramakrishna a Swamiji, but nothing brings it in bolder r lief than the following 'little' incident rel by Sister Nivedita. Sri Ramakrishna w bed-ridden at Cossipore with a fatal dise which the doctors had pronounced as can of the throat, leaving the young disciples w many warnings as to its infectious nat Once, 'Naren', as he then was, came in s found them huddled together, discussing t dangers of the case. He listened to what h had been told, and then, looking down, s at his feet the cup of gruel that had be partly taken by Sri Ramakrishna, and wh must have contained in it the germs of fatal discharges of mucus and pus, as t came out in his baffled attempts to swallow

(*Continued on next page bottom*)

MALAYALAM

Vivekananda Sahitya Sarvasvam (Translation of the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*). Volumes 1, 2, 3, and 6. Price Rs. 6 each volume. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Trichur, Kerala State.

One of the main undertakings—and in my opinion, the most important—in connection with the birth centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda is the translation of the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, hitherto available only in English, into different Indian languages. It is undoubtedly an arduous task, requiring the utmost patience, inexhaustible energy, and of course, the necessary literary equipment and an enormous expenditure. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Trichur, who are publishing the works in Malayalam, have done an admirable job of it. With the financial help of the State and the Central Governments, as also the generous public, they have already brought out four out of the proposed seven volumes of the *Complete Works*, under the general title 'Vivekānanda Sāhitya Sarvasvam'. The translation, done carefully and diligently by a body of devoted scholars, well versed in the Vivekananda literature, is true to the original; specially the sixth volume reads as if the words are coming hot from the lips of Swamiji himself. The language used is graceful, flowing, clear, and concise. The translators have maintained throughout the solemnity and dignity of the original. A speciality of the Malayalam edition is the arrangement of the works subjectwise and the addition of copious footnotes, containing relevant quotations from the scriptures, to support and substantiate the illuminating exegesis of Swamiji. This will, no doubt, be of the greatest help to the serious student. The translation is made directly from the original in English, Bengali, or Sanskrit, as the case may be. The get-up, printing, and binding are praiseworthy, specially in view of the low price of the volumes.

We hope the other three volumes will be out soon. These seven volumes, when complete, will be a precious asset to the people of Kerala, from the literary, cultural, religious, and every other point of view. For Swami Vivekananda was a saint with a universal outlook and a message for the whole of humanity. Every home in Kerala should possess a copy of these works in Malayalam—it is a *must* for the individual and national welfare.

P. Rama Menon

(*Continued from previous page*)

thing. He picked it up, and drank from it, before them all. Never was the infection of cancer mentioned among the disciples again.

And how the Swami loved his own disciples! Miss MacLeod writes: 'We arrived in Bombay on the twelfth of February, where Mr. Alasinga met us, who wore the vertical red marks of the Vaiṣṇavaite sect. Later on, once when I was sitting with Swami on our way to Kashmir, I happened to make the remark: "What a pity that Mr. Alasinga wears those Vaiṣṇavaite marks on his forehead!" Instantly Swami turned and said with great sternness: "Hands off! What have you ever done?" I did not know what I had done then. Of course, I never answered. Tears came to my eyes and I waited. I learnt later that Mr. Alasinga Perumal ... had gone from door to door to beg the money to send Vivekananda to the West. Perhaps, without him, we never would have met Vivekananda.'

Swamiji was a man who truly walked with God. May his blessings be ever on us!

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

On Thursday, the 17th January 1963, the day on which Swami Vivekananda's birthday fell this year according to the Indian calendar, the celebrations in connection with the birth centenary of the Swami were inaugurated at the Belur Math, the Headquarters of the Ramkrishna Math and Mission, and other centres of the Mission. The following is a brief report of the observances in the various places.

At the Belur Math, the day-long celebrations comprised of Vedic chanting, special worship, devotional songs, and readings from the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda.* About 200,000 devotees and admirers visited the Math to pay homage to Swami Vivekananda. The room where the Swami used to live was beautifully decorated, and visitors and devotees filed past in solemn silence viewing his room and his personal belongings which are preserved there. *Prasāda* (consecrated food) was distributed to about 15,000 people.

In the afternoon, a public meeting was held at the Math, with Swami Yatiswarananda, Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, in the chair. Swami Madhavananda, President of the Math and Mission, read out his message from the balcony outside Swami Vivekananda's room (for the text of the message please see *Prabuddha Bharata,* February 1963, pp. 41-42).

On the morning of Sunday, 20 January, a procession of devotees, over two miles long, went from the Belur Math to the Cossipore garden house, four miles away, where Sri Ramakrishna spent his last days.

In the afternoon, at 3-30 on the same day, a public meeting was held in Deshapriya Park in south Calcutta, when Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, President of India, formally inaugurated the world-wide centenary celebrations (his speech on the occasion is published in the February 1963 issue of *Prabuddha Bharata,* pp. 43-46). About 50,000 people attended the function.

In a message sent for the occasion, the late Dr. Rajendra Prasad, former President of India, said: 'Men who lead their fellow beings in any sphere of life are rare and those that lead the leaders are rarer still. These super-guides come not very often upon this earth to uplift the sinking section of humanity. Swami Vivekananda was one of these super souls. Well may the land of Bharat feel ennobled by the memory of such a great one having sprung on its soil to serve humanity at large, to be the spiritual pathfinder of many a suffering soul, and to shine in the spiritual firmament with the lustre of the glory of Vedic civilization enlightening the world. It was he who could set the sceptic mind of the West at rest in the spiritual arena. Ambassadors of spiritual missions had risen before him in the East, but none could speak to the West as he did with that voice of conviction, keeping audiences spellbound and enthralled. The worthy disciple of the worthy Master rose to the pinnacle of spiritual eminence, preaching the gospel of the innate oneness of the human race, and preaching universal love and the affinity of all human souls. Like the story of the seed and the tree, each sustaining the other's existence, personifying the two essential stages of spiritual sublimity, the centenary of this great scion of the spiritual world reminds us of the greatness of the human soul, for there could be no better interpreter of the heritage of the Vedic civilization than he. Not only Indians but Westerners too stand indebted to Swami Vivekananda for his bequest of *viveka* (wisdom) to posterity, and I join the millions all over the world in wishing success to the celebrations in connection with his birth centenary everywhere.'

In New Delhi, addressing a huge gathering at the Ramlila grounds, on the 17 January, Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, said that the nation could still gain inspiration from Vivekananda's writings and teachings. He strongly recommended the study of his works, which, he said, would infuse strength and spirit of nationalism into people's mind and awaken them to a great extent, because every word he uttered was imbued with the spirit of patriotism. Whatever he said was applicable even in modern times, he said.

Presiding over another meeting, held at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, on 3 February, he exhorted the people to follow the teachings of Swami Vivekananda who had taught mankind to shed fear. Swami Vivekananda, he said, fought relentlessly against the internal debilities in the various spheres of national life. The Swami had a 'luminous mind', and he never lost faith in India's spirituality even though here people were poor and downtrodden. If he were to name a single individual as an ideal for children and young men, he would name Swami Vivekananda, who, although he died before he was forty, left a deep impression on the sands of time. This spoke for the intensity with which he lived. Swamiji had a unique personality, and eminently integrated the past heritage with modern life. He gave a new orientation to old ideals. Though he was not fortunate enough to have met the Swami, Sri Nehru said, he was able to feel the glow of his personality.

Recitation competitions in Sanskrit, Hindi, English, Bengali, Punjabi, and Tamil for school students, and speech competitions in English and Hindi for both school and college students, were held by the local branch of the Mission. A Students' Day Meeting was held on 10 February 63.

In Madras, on 17 January, a decorated portrait of Swamiji was taken in procession in the Mylapore area, where the local Ramakrishna Math is situated. In different parts of the city, more than forty processions by the students and people of the locality were taken around the principal streets. After the procession, 101 ceremonial lamps were lighted to mark the occasion. Addressing the gathering on the occasion, Sri Kamaraj Nadar, the Chief Minister of Madras, praised the services of the Swami to the nation. *Prasāda* was distributed to about 10,000 devotees, and 1400 poor people were fed on the occasion. A mammoth public meeting was held on 20 January, when Sri Morarji Desai, the Union Minister for Finance, formally inaugurated the celebrations in the State. Dr. C. P Ramaswami Aiyar presided over the meeting, which was addressed by Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam, State Finance Minister, and others. Sri Bhaktavatsalam announced that the State Government had decided to rename the 'Ice House' in Triplicane, where Swamiji stayed in 1897, after his return from the West, as 'Vivekananda House', and also to install a statue in the compound of the house.

Similar celebrations were held in Bombay, Patna, Asansol, Varanasi, Shillong, Chandigarh, and other places.

CELEBRATIONS OUTSIDE INDIA

VEDANTA SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS. U.S.A.

On January 17, a special worship with prayers and meditation was conducted in the shrine of the Society. A number of devotees attended the function. On January 20, a public meeting was held in the chapel of the Society in the morning. Prayers, an address on 'Swami Vivekananda: the Man of the Hour', reading of Swamiji's poem 'The Song of the Sannyāsin', devotional songs, and instrumental music formed the items of the programme. The booklet *The Universal Message of Swami Vivekananda* was distributed. A notable feature of the celebration is the presentation of the book *Vivekananda*:

The Yogas and Other Works, compiled with a biography by Swami Nikhilananda, to universities, colleges, and public libraries in different parts of the United States.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE
LONDON

The formal inauguration of the centenary celebrations was performed at a public meeting in the Caxton Hall, on 31 January, by Mr. M. C. Chagla, the Indian High Commissioner. There were nearly 400 people, in spite of the snow-fall and the bad weather. Mr. Chagla said on the occasion that Swamiji was indeed a bridge between the East and the West. 'He was not only a great and illustrious son of India, but also known in the West as in his own country. He realized and preached day and night that the East could learn from the West and the West from the East. In his view, both parts of the world had much to contribute to each other for the benefit and emancipation of the human race. Swamiji's creed was that every individual had the divine spark in him. He also asserted that we could find God everywhere, in a Hindu temple, a Christian church, a Hebrew synagogue, or a Muslim mosque. God is omnipresent.

'Swami Vivekananda's legacy is the Ramakrishna Mission, with its branches dotted all over the world. They exist to spread the gospel of Swamiji and bring succour to the needy. One of the important tenets of Swamiji's teaching is that the best form of worship is service of mankind. The best way to show your faith in God or to practise religion is to serve your fellow man. Therefore the Ramakrishna Mission all over the world is dedicated to humanitarian work.'

Rev. Sydney Spencer, former Principal of Manchester College, Oxford, said on the occasion that what appealed most to him about Swami Vivekananda was the work that is being done by the Ramakrishna Mission centres. They are all engaged in propagating religious unity, Rev. Spencer reminded the dedicated audience. The words of Swami Vivekananda, he said, were most prophetic. Swamiji said: 'Unity in variety is the plan of the universe', and he applied the truth in the sphere of religions. His approach was that of a mystic, like his Master Sri Ramakrishna's. He was truly a holy man, a yogi, an *akhaṇḍa brahmachārin*.

CELEBRATION IN PRAGUE

The Czechoslovak Peace Committee and other cultural and scientific institutions held an evening in honour of Swami Vivekananda at the Naprstek Ethnographical Museum in Prague. Mr. R. K. Jordar, the Indian Cultural Attache in Prague, spoke about the life and work of Swami Vivekananda. Dr. Boris Merhaut of the Institute of Eastern Studies of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, spoke about Swami Vivekananda's importance for the development of independent India and his programme of national awakening. Among those present were: members of the Presidium of the Czechoslovak Peace Committee, Patriarch of the Czechoslovak Church, Dr. Miroslav Novak, Chairman of the Prague Peace Committee, Dr. Jaromir Berak, and the Director of the Institute of Eastern Studies, Jaroslav Prusek.

CELEBRATION IN MOSCOW

Under the joint auspices of the Institute of the Peoples of Asia and the Institute of Philosophy, the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, a scientific session was held presided over by Academician, Mr. P. N. Fedosiev, as a part of the centenary celebration in Moscow. 'Vivekananda, Humanist and Fighter for Social Progress', 'Philosophical Concepts of Vivekananda', 'Vivekananda and Indian Literature', 'Enlightening Ideas of Vivekananda' were some of the papers read on the occasion.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVIII JUNE 1963 No. 6

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

——:o:——

HOMAGE TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

विवेकानन्द-प्रशस्तिः

By Professor Rabindra Kumar Siddhanta Sastri

अखिलभुवनसारे भारते पुण्यवर्षे
सकलसुगुणरम्या राजते वङ्गभूमिः।
सुविदितनृपधान्यां लोकमान्यो नरेन्द्रो
जनिमलभत तस्यां दत्तवंशावतंसः ॥ १ ॥

1. In the sacred land of India, the epitome of the entire world, there is a region named Bengal, charming in merits of all description. At the famous capital of that region was born Narendra, a scion of the family of the Dattas, who deserves respect from all.

पशुपतिमतिमान्यं ब्रह्मशक्रादिवन्द्यं
कृतनिखिलनिवेशा दत्तजाया सिषेवे ।
प्रणयमतुलमाप्त्वा पुत्ररूपेण तस्यां
विधृतमनुजदेहो जातवांस्तेन शम्भुः ॥ २ ॥

2. His mother (Bhuvanesvari Dutta), with all her mind, served the most adorable God Paśupati, worshipped even by Brahma, Indra, and such other divinities. Lord Śambhu, being highly pleased with her devotion, assumed human form and was born as her son.

वर्णाश्रमाख्यमतुलं भुविसारधर्मं
ध्वंसोन्मुखं बहुविधैर्मनुजापकार्यैः ।
वैदेशिकं च नृपतिं रिपुपक्षभुक्तं
दृष्ट्वा निदारुणमयं लभतेस्म दुःखम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. Having observed the decaying condition of the peerless Varṇāśrama Dharma, the essence of all religions on earth, caused by different kinds of sinful activity of the people, and having found the foreign rulers unfriendly to that religion, he was feeling excessive agony of mind.

श्रीरामकृष्णनिकषा गतवान् कदाचित्
श्रुत्वा तदीयवदनाच्छ्रुतिसारभाष्यम् ।
संरक्षितुं सुविपुलं निजधर्ममार्यो
ध्यायन् सुशान्तहृदयो यमितां प्रपेदे ॥ ४ ॥

4. Once, as he went to Sri Ramakrishna, he heard from him the true essence of Vedic texts. Since then, this worthy one of tranquil mind, determined to protect his great religion, set his whole heart upon it.

वङ्गेषु छात्रनिवहान्नवभावमुग्धान्
म्लेच्छैर्नितान्तविजितान् जडवादसारैः ।
दृष्ट्वा विचिन्त्य मनसा प्रतिकारमीप्सुः
संन्यासिभावमगमत् स युवापि साधुः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Having found the student community of Bengal lured by the new ideas and very much overcome by the agnostics, the exponents of materialism, and with the thought of finding out a remedy, he renounced the world, though young in age.

सुप्तं स्वकीयहृदये सुविवेकमद्धा
नेयात् प्रजागरमसौ श्रुतिधमगुप्त्यै ।
ज्ञात्वेति सिद्धमनुजः प्रददौ स तस्मा-
यानन्दशब्दसमितां हि विवेकसंज्ञाम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. As he knew, indeed, that he, for the protection of Vedic religion, would awaken the dormant power of discrimination in him, this perfect one gave himself the name of 'Viveka', coupled with 'Ānanda' (Vivekānanda).

स्वर्गं याते नरमुनिवरे रामकृष्णाह्वये द्राक्
शिष्यास्सर्वे सुचरितममुं श्रीविवेकं वरेण्यम् ।
मत्वा शक्तं नवगुरुपदे स्थापयाञ्चक्रिरेऽद्धा
सोऽपि त्रातुं:मनुजनिवहान् वोढवान्नेतृभावम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. Afterwards, in the absence of that great seer, Sri Ramakrishna, who had departed for heaven, all his disciples, finding the virtuous Vivekananda as the fittest person, made him their new guide; and he, too, with a view to saving humanity at large, accepted the leadership.

लब्धुं ज्ञानं नवनवतमं तीर्थसङ्घांश्च द्रष्टुं
नेतुं धर्मं निजमनुपमं सर्वलोकप्रकाशम् ।
त्यक्त्वा पीठं सुकृतिनिलयं सर्वसिद्धेर्निकेतं
स्मारं स्मारं स्वगुरुचरणं निर्गतोऽभूद् विवेकः ॥८॥

8. In order to acquire new knowledge, to visit different holy places, and to preach his unparalleled religion to the entire humanity, Vivekananda left the sacred sanctuary, the abode of all virtues and perfections and went out, constantly remembering the sacred feet of his Guru.

नानाधमप्रतिनिधिवरैर्नायकैर्धर्मराशेः
संव्याख्यातुं निजनिजमतङ्कार्यते धर्मसंस्था ।
श्रुत्वा चैतद् गुणिगणमुखाद् देशमामेरिकाख्यं
श्रौतं धर्मं विवरितुमना यातुमैच्छत् त्वरावान् ॥९॥

9. Having learnt from some respectable persons that representatives of different faiths were arranging a religious congress with a view to expounding their respective religions, he made up his mind to go to America soon to explain the Vedic religion in the said congress.

अथ विलसति काले तत्र देशे स धीरो
विपुलसमितिमध्ये चीरकाषायधारी ।
प्रमितमधुरवाक्यैः शुद्धसिद्धान्तयुक्तै-
र्निखिलमनुजवर्यान् विस्मयं द्राङ् निनाय ॥१०॥

10. Then, in a bright season, this sober person with a simple dress of insignificant ochre robes stood up in the midst of the huge gathering in that country, and by a neat little speech, full of sweet words and clean conclusions, caught all by surprise.

निजनिरुपमबुद्ध्या सर्वदेशेषु धीमान्
विपुलवचनभङ्ग्या वह्निभातिप्रकाशः ।
नवनवनरसङ्घे व्याख्यया सारयुक्त्या
समनयदतितूर्णं श्रेष्टतां स स्वधर्मम् ॥११॥

11. Then, in different countries, before different gatherings of people, by dint of his incomparable wisdom, uncommon mode of speaking, and interpretations full of weighty arguments, this talented man, shining like a flame of fire, established within a short time the superiority of his own religion.

भवतु भवतु दीप्तिः शुद्धवर्णाश्रमाणां
चरतु चरतु धर्मो वैदिकः शान्तिसारः ।
लसतु लसतु पुण्यो यज्ञकार्यप्रभावो
भुवि विलसतु मान्या श्रीविवेकस्य वाणी ॥१२॥

12. Let the true *varṇas* and *āśramas* become brilliant, let the Vedic religion, with peace as its essence, be practised, let the glory of the spirit of sacrifice shine, and let the great teachings of Sri Vivekananda hold their own dignity all over the world.

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

December 1931

Swami Vijnananandaji visited the pilgrim centres of Southern India in December 1931 and, after travelling all over South India and giving religious instructions to countless devotees and monks, came on December 21 to the Madras Math. From there he went to Kanchipuram and thence to Madurai. Staying there for a couple of days and visiting the temples of Devī Mīnākṣī and Lord Sundareśvara, he went to Kanya Kumari via Trivandrum. There he looked intently for a long time at the Vivekananda Rock, and in a trembling voice, said to the monk accompanying him: 'You see, Swamiji had a strange vision as he sat upon this rock on the eve of his departure for America.' Saying this, he went into deep meditation and remained in it for some time.

Then, when he visited the Kanya Kumari temple, he was in a sublime mood of ecstasy while in the presence of the Goddess. He gazed steadily at Her for more than an hour. A monk who was with him said later: 'During this whole period of an hour, there was not even a quiver of his eyelids.'

From there he went to Rameswaram. He was so delighted at seeing the deity there that he told his companion: 'What I wanted has been fulfilled.'

At Ramnad, on the second day, he saw Swamiji in a dream. As soon as he awoke, he told his companion in great joy: 'I saw Swamiji just now in a dream. He was walking about restlessly.' There was an India-wide hartal on that day in protest against Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's arrest.

From Rameswaram he returned to the Madras Math. On Sunday, the 10th January, at the request of the devotees who had gathered there, he gave a religious discourse, in which he said: 'The aim of human life is to realize God, as this alone can give us real joy and eternal peace. People run after wealth, name, and fame; but, in the end, they find that the results are contrary. It is not only that it all ends in disappointment, but also mental disquiet follows and one thinks oneself unhappier than before. Worldly riches only swell our egotism and pride, and there is no greater impediment in the pursuit of religious path than this.

'Indeed, it is this pride, born of ignorance, that blinds our vision. God's glory is manifest all around us, but still we do not see Him, the reason being that we are reluctant to cast off the veil of ignorance that covers our vision. Some had asked Sri Ramakrishna: "Why don't we see God?" He covered his face with a cloth and said: "You can't see me now because my face is covered. In the same way, if you remove the veil of illusion which stands between you and God, you will find Him revealed before your eyes."

'The greatest duty of man is to keep his mind centred on God. With every breath we should think of Him. We should know that remembrance of Him when we inhale the air purifies our inner being and remembrance during exhalation sanctifies our body. The greatest need is to concentrate on Him when we are dying. Then, all those whom we thought of as our near and dear ones in our lives forsake us. We very often find that for want of purity of heart and concentration on God, people get terribly afraid on the eve of death; some cry out in fear at the sight of hideous apparitions of the messengers of Death. But the glory of God's name saves us from these fears and also delivers us for all times from the clutches of Death.'

A devotee: 'Sir, was it with a view to conquering death that Sri Ramakrishna worshipped the Universal Mother?'

Maharaj: 'Well, you can take it in any way that appeals to you. It might have been with the idea of conquering death or with some higher purpose, to realize the ultimate Truth. But, in point of fact, whatever spiritual austerities he went through were not necessary for his own salvation or spiritual insight. He, in truth, was a perfect *jñānin* from his very birth. For a great soul like him to be born into the world, to undergo spiritual austerities, and to practise difficult disciplines was only to set an example before the world and for the benefit of humanity.

Devotee: 'What was your mental reaction when you saw Sri Ramakrishna for the first time?'

Maharaj: 'He seemed to me to be just like a child, even purer and simpler than a child. Nothing worldly occupied his mind; his only thought was of the Divine Mother. Contact with him would make one feel that one's heart had been cleansed of all dross. As a matter of fact, the company of holy men makes the heart pure for ever. It is said that the sage Durvāsas once went to visit hell where condemned souls were suffering all sorts of tortures as punishment for their sins. As soon as the sage made his appearance there, they were relieved of their agonies and began to sing the praises of God. Hell seemed to have been transformed into heaven; the reason was that the sage's purity of life had such innate power in it as to deliver those tortured souls from their sins, and save them from the agonies of hell.

'We have to remember that all substances have three aspects: name, form, and essence. So long as we are unable to transcend the realm of name and form, we cannot comprehend the real essence of the thing. And only the realization of Ātman, the ultimate verity behind all things, will give us everlasting peace.'

Devotee: 'But, Swamiji, what we lack is faith; and we find that the rational in us always stands in the way of that faith. What would you advise us about it?'

Maharaj: 'What you say is not the whole truth. Faith there is, certainly; there is nobody in the world without faith. Without it you would not be able to take a single breath.'

Devotee: 'You were saying, Swamiji, that contemplation of God leads to heavenly joy and everlasting peace. But how is that possible in the present state of things when we see all over the country sorrow and heart-rending wailing due to political movements and the lack of trade and commerce?'

Maharaj: 'Why should you attach so much importance to worldly events and movements? These have been and always will be there. If, for instance, the political independence you are striving for becomes a reality, will that bring an end to all your troubles? Certainly not. As a matter of fact, it is not these external struggles which give rise to mental unrest, but it is our inordinate attachment to worldly things and uncontrollable desire to acquire them that make our spirits restless. If God Himself comes down to confer on us the blessing of peace, we will turn down His offer. This is why He comes down as the embodiment of renunciation. He comes to deprive us of all our worldly possessions and everything that we call our own; but very few among us are prepared to discard everything for the sake of God, our attachment being more for the treasures of the world, than for those of heaven. You were talking of political agitation. Well, look at Mahatma Gandhi. He has thrown his entire being into this struggle; but would you say that, even while in the thick of the fight, he does not meditate on God and is not striving for everlasting peace of mind? In the midst of your hard life-struggle, your efforts should be directed towards attaining mental equilibrium. That is the only way of achieving worldly peace, and you have to study this aspect of Gandhiji's life.'

Devotee: 'Gandhiji, of course, is unique. Is it possible for ordinary people to emulate him?'

Maharaj: 'Why not? He is a person in flesh and blood just like yourselves, and why can't you be like him? If the sorrows and miseries of the country had really stirred your hearts, you, too, would have joined him in your endeavour to gain mental peace. And only then would you realize what an amount of self-sacrifice that would entail. To achieve real peace, what is needed is renunciation and self-purification—that is the all-time truth. Whether in the spiritual or in the political sphere, you cannot expect to achieve anything without self-abnegation.'

After keeping silent for a few seconds, he softly said: 'In reality, the entire universe has its basis in a gigantic self-sacrifice.'

Maharaj stopped speaking to the devotees as he was to leave for Calcutta after a short while. The assembled devotees prayed for his blessings. He said: 'When a monk meets another person, he asks him, "Is your vision clear?" This greeting means that everything depends on how we look upon this world. To see the pure existence of God behind the multiplicity of things in the world—that is the true angle of vision. People go to temples to see God; but that is only His external manifestation. Even behind that mat lying on the floor, you have to realize the existence of the divinity. For far beyond all name and form is God's benign existence shining brighter than gold. That you may all receive spiritual illumination and gain eternal peace through the realization of the ultimate Truth is my earnest and heartfelt prayer to God.'

Belur Math, January 12, 1932

After spending about three weeks in South India, visiting the pilgrim centres, Swami Vijnanananda came back to Belur Math. After the midday rest, he came to visit Mahapurush Maharaj and the two were full of joy on meeting each other. The latter asked him what places he had visited.

Swami Vijnanananda: 'From Madras, I went to Madurai and Trivandrum. In the latter place, would you believe it, there are such huge coco-nuts (indicating with his hands the size), each containing about a and a quarter of very sweet water! The went to Rameswaram and Kanya Ku The temple at Rameswaram is so beautif I have not seen another temple with marvellous carvings and engravings. Co back to Madras, I visited Bangalore, Mys and Ooty. It was a very pleasant trip, b the South Indian food became somewh monotonous. Now, I will have a go change.'

Swami Vijnanananda being known to h fond of torches and fountain-pens, Maha purushji affectionately told him: 'I wo present a pen and a torch to you.'

There was nothing serious in their conve sation; there was in it an expression of de joy and affection and an exchange of profo heartiness and cordiality. Each seemed to filled with the joy of the other's compa Swami Vijnanananda left after a while for h evening stroll. Mahapurushji said late 'It was such a pleasure to meet Hariprasa (the pre-monastic name of Swami Vijna nanda). What a nice child-like nature h has!'

* * *

At night, one of the monks, after maki his obeisance to Swami Vijnanananandaji, ask him: 'How did you like your pilgrimage the South, Maharaj?'

Maharaj: 'Well, it's the same everywhe God pervades everything, inside and outsi But, of course, it is a joyful experience. Wh you realize that He is within you, you w get rid of all your worldly desires; and it for this that you have renounced everythi Do you understand?'

Monk: 'Bless me, Maharaj, that I m really understand that.'

Maharaj: 'I always pray for all as I p for myself that all may be truly hap Pass Prayer is a very important thing. are controlled only when we have the vision of God. Repeat His name as much you can—there need be no fear, my brothe

Next morning, Swami Vijnanananda ca

to Mahapurushji's room with a German cup and saucer which he had bought after much selection the previous day. They talked in a jovial mood, like two small boys. Suddenly, Mahapurushji became grave and broke into a song:

'Don't you worry about having a vision of the Divine Mother. She is not the Mother of yours and mine alone, but of all the universe. She wants to hear Her children call Her, and therefore, keeps Herself concealed, lest after seeing Her they should cease to call Her.'

The song changed the whole atmosphere of the room and the singer and listeners were all filled with a feeling of divine emotion. They remained speechless in a mood of ecstasy and, after some time, Swami Vijnanananda said: 'It is a beautiful song. Very impressive. What else is there now but this?'

Mahapurushji: 'Have you had your tea?'

Swami Vijnanananda: 'No, not yet; I shall go and have it now.'

* * *

In the afternoon, a monk earnestly prayed for Vijnan Maharaj's blessings and for a few words of advice. Maharaj, in a serious mood, said: 'You have nothing to worry about when you are always in the presence of the Master and of Mahapurush Maharaj. Always recite the name of God, throughout the day and night. While doing your allotted duties, you should all the time be thinking of Him, in the same way (as the Master said) as a woman thinks of her paramour. The paramour, of course, can be seen; but where is the trace of God? Still you can get a glimpse of Him sometimes, and that's why you have left everything to become a monk. Take care that doubts of any sort do not assail you. Well, I tell you, you have nothing to worry about.'

At another time, he told a monk: 'You are in the company of 'Mahapurush'—a liberated soul. Don't worry about salvation—it will come by itself.'

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE WEST

[EDITORIAL]

Till recent years, the achievements of Swami Vivekananda in the West used to be summed up in a few sentences: (1) He stirred up the Western world to a consciousness of the cultural and spiritual greatness of India, so that the West became more respectful of India and sympathetic towards her aspirations. (2) As a consequence of this, the Indians themselves regained the lost faith in their own worth and in the high destiny of their motherland. (3) Thenceforward, the Indians came to evaluate the Western ideas and institutions at their true worth, and as a result, the erstwhile blind imitation or prejudiced rejection was replaced by thoughtful adaptation. (4) Thus was opened a new chapter of mutual esteem, understanding, and co-operation. (5) The false propaganda against India by Western missionaries received its death blow, and along with this, the mass conversion of the Hindus to Christianity became a thing of the past.

All this is true. But to Marie Louise Burke, the author of *Swami Vivekananda in America: New Discoveries*, goes the credit of bringing forth fully to the forefront the extensive spiritual ministration he undertook throughout the length and breadth of the United States of America, and the great number of followers he made of the universal spiritual message of India. Earlier writers had also referred to this fact, and sometimes, very pointedly; but to produce a telling effect on the reading public, they did not have before them the mass of evidence that Mrs. Burke adduces, nor did they study this phase of Swamiji's life against its true background and in the light of the place it occupied in the totality of his contribution to the uplift of the human spirit just like any other spiritual messenger of the highest order that the world has seen so far. Thus Swami Vivekananda's achievements in the West are worth a little detailed study here in the light of the material provided by Mrs. Burke in her book.

Swamiji visited the West twice—first in connection with the Chicago Parliament of Religions (September 1893). This time he sailed from Bombay on May 31, 1893 and returned to India after three and half years through Colombo, where he landed on January 15, 1897. For his second visit, he left Calcutta on June 22, 1899 and came back to Calcutta on December 9, 1900. Before assessing his achievements in general terms in the field of the spirit and in other spheres of abstract ideas, it will be well to finish with the more concrete phases.

During his first visit, he travelled extensively throughout the United States, delivering lectures to thousands of appreciative people. But, for securing more permanent results, he soon adopted the process of personal contact through class talks and interviews, mainly at Greenacre and New York, which culminated in the most intensive training to an intimate circle of disciples at Thousand Island Park. This process enabled him to start a Vedānta centre in New York in November 1895. He, also, initiated two Americans into the monastic life according to Hindu rites. This was a very bold experiment, not only because it was entirely a new conception in the West, but also because the conservative section in India of those days would not approve of such a step. The experiment, of course, was not quite a success, for the persons he could get at that initial stage were hardly suited for the purpose. Thus Madame Marie Louise, a Frenchwoman by whom he called Swami Abhayananda, Herr Leon Landsberg, a Russian Jew he called Swami Kripananda, both failed come up to his expectation, though showed much promise in the earlier Madame Louise's initiation into was something revolutionary from the point of view. For the Order of monks which Swamiji belonged did not much courage *sannyāsa* for a woman even in At a later time, he initiated Dr. Street *sannyāsa* with the name of Swami During this time he also found a very voted follower in a young Englishman, Goodwin, an expert in shorthand, who renounced everything to follow the a *brahmacārin* under the name Gurudas to earn the gratitude of later generations recording many of the Swami's lectures. in England, with inspiration from him, Margaret E. Noble, an Irish educationist, voted her whole life to the uplift of general and the Indian womanhood in ular under the name 'Nivedita' or the cated one', which she received from her as a *brahmacāriṇī*.

The Swami's first visit to England also the beginning of a Vedānta movement with a semi-permanent centre, mainly care of by Mr. E. T. Sturdy. The second visit to the West consolidated achievements already made. The New centre had, by then, become fully Another centre was now started at Francisco, which also became The Shanti Ashrama in the west coast also established. And there sprang up Vedānta centres, which, however, did prosper equally. Nevertheless, the attained in these places was remarkable, it opened out the way for others who followed him to consolidate and expand ever-increasing local support the work phetically conceived and heroically by the illustrious Swami.

Another concrete achievement of

was the number of valuable books written by him or published from the records of his lectures and class talks. The books became very popular, educating the Western people about the Indian mode of spiritual endeavour and synthesizing for the Hindus themselves the thoughts of their forefathers. The books have been gaining in popularity all along. The scholarship displayed in them is really deep and thorough, the presentation is charming, and every page reveals the depth of the Swami's realization of the truths he preached.

Thus we find that, in the West, he formulated his ideas clearly, had them printed as books and brochures, trained a group of devoted disciples, some of them dedicated wholly to his cause, and he established some centres for the propagation of his message. In addition to all this, he obtained the financial backing of Mrs. Ole Bull of U.S.A. and Miss Henreitta Muller of England for starting some of his Indian works. He tried to earn money by personal effort for his work in India, but the success in this was not commensurate with his expectations.

II

The success of his work depended on various other factors. In addition to his close adherents, he needed wider circles of friends and admirers who would lend direct and indirect support to his movement as a whole. Again, in addition to rousing popular sentiment, the permanence of the work needed the approval of the intelligentsia, as also of the religious and social leaders. We shall see that the Swami succeeded immensely in these fields as well.

The readers of the Swami's *Life* are aware of the fine oratory he commanded, which was lauded by the American newspapers with one voice; and his admirers were varied and numerous, as revealed by Mrs. Burke in her book, referred to earlier. She quotes from the autobiography of the well-known poetess, Miss Harriet Monroe, who attended the Parliament of Religions at Chicago: 'It was the last of these, Swami Vivekananda, the magnificent, who stole the whole show and captured the town. Others of the foreign groups spoke well. ... But the handsome monk in the orange robe gave us in perfect English a masterpiece. His personality, dominant, magnetic; his voice, rich as a bronze bell; the controlled fervour of his feeling; the beauty of his message to the Western world he was facing for the first time—these combined to give us a rare and perfect moment of supreme emotion. It was human eloquence at its highest pitch.' If this was the reaction of one who heard him, the impact on those who read his lectures years later was no less. For this, we have a recent testimony in the words of Romain Rolland: 'His words are great music, phrases in the style of Beethoven, stirring rhythms like the Handel choruses. I cannot touch these sayings of his, scattered as they are through the pages of books at thirty years' distance, without receiving a thrill through my body like an electric shock. And what shocks, what transports must have been produced when in burning words they issued from the lips of the hero!'

We need not multiply quotations from the American newspapers substantiating the above impact of his personality on others; for these are well known to the readers of the *Life of Swami Vivekananda*. For additional information, the interested reader may turn to the pages of Mrs. Burke's book, from which we reproduce only two typical excerpts that originally appeared in the *Appeal-Avalanche* of January 15 and 16, 1894: '"One of the giants of the platform", "a sensation of the World's Fair Parliament", "an orator by Divine right"—All this and more is true of Swami Vivekananda the Hindu monk.' 'His matchless oratory, deep penetration into things occult, his cleverness in debate, and great earnestness captured the attention of the world's thinking men at the World's Fair Parliament of Religions, who have since heard him during his lecture tour through many of the states of the Union. ... In conversation he is a most pleasant gentleman; his choice of words are the gems of the English language, and his general bearing ranks him with the most cultured people of Western etiquette and custom.'

In his itinerary, he covered almost the whole of the United States of America. He worked with equal energy and success in London and some places around the city. He also spoke at the Congress of the History of Religions in 1900, at Paris. And his European tours were full of personal contacts of far-reaching effect. Thus his eagerness to deliver his message most effectively and in the shortest of time possible can be compared with the zeal of the most noted prophets recorded in history.

Even the recorded lectures and class talks, which form only a part of the numerous lectures and interviews given by him, give an idea of the intensity of his activity during the months following the Parliament of Religions. Besides these, from January 28, 1895, he started the New York classes, which were followed, as already noted, by more intensive training at the Thousand Island Park (June 19 to August 7, 1895).

After Thousand Island Park, he went to England, where also he met with equal success, or even greater success in the sense that he got from there some staunch disciples like the Seviers and Nivedita who devoted themselves and their money to his Indian work whole-heartedly. He returned to New York on December 6, 1895 to resume his work. He returned to England next year in the summer, from where he started for the Continent in July, returning to London on September 17, 1896. Soon his first visit to the West ended and he was in India.

During these travels in the West, in the course of his lectures and conversations, he contacted eminent intellectuals like Professors William James, Max Müller, Paul Deussen, and others, artistes like Madame Calve and Sarah Bernhardt, scientists like Maxim and Tesla, and many other noted personalities in both the continents who were highly impressed by his life and message and profited by them in personal life or in their special fields of activity.

From the very beginning, Swamiji had an idea of ministering to the spiritual needs of the West and acquiring from them the wherewithal for his scheme of regenerating India. From the facts presented so far, one may assume that he was very successful in his mission of getting financial support for his Indian programme. But actuality belies such an assumption. For the first few months, he was swindled by a lecture bureau which exploited his talents and made money, but paid him almost nothing in exchange. Then he decided to stand on his own legs; but this, too, brought no better monetary success. And the little he got he often gave away in charities. To illustrate this, we may present a few excerpts: 'Now my children,' he wrote to Alasinga in May 1895, 'I could have made a grand success in the way of organizing here, if I were a worldly hypocrite.' His *Life* states: 'The Swami gave his services free as air. The rent was paid by voluntary subscriptions, and when these were found insufficient, the Swami hired a hall and gave secular lectures on India and devoted the proceeds to the maintenance of the classes.' The proceeds of a lecture in Brooklyn on February 25, 1895, was paid to Sasipada Banerjee of Calcutta for the maintenance of Hindu widows. 'For himself, he accepts for public lectures only what is necessary for travelling expenses and his food, clothing, and lodging from week to week,' wrote Professor Lewis G. James on February 24, 1895. 'I personally know of one instance where he returned to an enthusiastic admirer a check of $ 500, freely given.' These lectures are for the joint benefit of the Swami Vivekananda's Educational Work, and the Publication fund of the Ethical Associati

(Announcement in the Bulletin of the Brooklyn Ethical Association). The *Appeal-Avalanche* of January 22, 1894 had the following comment: 'Heretofore, Vivekananda has lectured for the benefit of one charity-worthy object or another, and it can be safely said that he has rendered them material aid. Last night, however, he lectured for his own benefit.'

III

These lectures, interviews, etc. were calculated to present the universal ideas embedded in the ancient Indian scriptures in the truest, clearest, and most forceful way possible. Along with such an intellectual approach, Swamiji also attended to the spiritual uplift of all who came to him. Of this, we have enough recorded evidence. But much more can be easily inferred. Let us first deal with representative written testimonies. It was not really through the intellect, but through the heart that Swamiji's appeal reached the Christian world. 'Those who came to know him best', wrote the *Iowa State Register* in 1894, 'found him the most gentle and lovable of men, so honest, frank, and unpretending, always grateful for the many kindnesses that were shown to him. Vivekananda and his cause found a place in the hearts of all true Christians.'

The *Detroit Free Press* of February 11, 1894 made the following announcement: 'Since the Parliament, he has spoken to immense audiences in many towns and cities who have but one opinion of praise and (are) enthusiastic over his magnetic power, and his way of giving light and life to every subject he touches. Naturally, his views of great questions, coming like himself from the other side of the globe, are refreshing and stirring to American people.'

And we have on record the experiences of two American ladies—Miss Christine Greenstidel, later known as Sister Christine and Miss Marguerite Cook. The former attended all the lectures given by Swamiji at Detroit, and wrote: 'The power that emanated from this mysterious being was so great that one all but shrank from it. It was overwhelming.' After hearing Swamiji, the latter was impelled for the first time in her life to congratulate the speaker by shaking hands with him. 'I shall never forget his searching look', she said many years later; 'I was so aware of his greatness and holiness that I couldn't bear to wash my hand for three days.' The effect of Swamiji's spiritual ministration through all these several means can best be summed up in Sister Christine's words: 'Was it possible to hear and feel this and ever be the same again? All one's values were changed. The seed of spirituality was planted to grow and grow throughout the years until it inevitably reached fruition.' The *Detroit Free Press* of February 21, 1894 had this comment: 'He does not antagonize, but lifts people up to a higher level—they see something beyond man-made creeds and denominational names, and they feel one with him in their religious beliefs.'

Again, when we hear of the audience at the Chicago Parliament of Religions standing up electrified at the mere utterance of the simple words 'Sisters and Brothers of America' and cheering him as one man, when Mrs. Mary C. Funke, writing of his farewell speech at Detroit, says, 'there was a hush, a stillness that could almost be felt, and the vast audience breathed as one man', and when similar statements are made almost everywhere and Swamiji himself asserts that, while speaking, he felt as though some power emanated from him and engulfed his audiences, we can easily infer that it was nothing but the spiritual inspiration that prophets and saints of the highest order are known to possess and impart to others.

All this on the positive side. But to make his mission effective, he had to demolish the false propaganda of others, which blocked the way for a true understanding of the message of India to the West as well as of the West's contribution to the progress of the world as a whole. It was a most unpleasant duty, a dangerous task that raised a veritable hornet's nest about him, impugning his character and threatening his very life. The propaganda against India had long been engineered and led by the Christian missionaries, either out of blind fanaticism or for ensuring popular support for their work in the East. When Swami Vivekananda's personality and speeches began to pull down this veil of falsehood, they turned against him, and some Indians too, of both Christian and other denominations joined hands with them. Among these were the admirers of Pandita Ramabai, a Hindu widow converted to Christianity, who had spread all sorts of untruths or half-truths against Hindu society for the sake of gaining the financial backing of the American public for her educational endeavour in India. The Theosophists were not friendly to the Swami, and Mr. Mazumdar became vitriolic.

Swami Vivekananda did not care much for the malicious personal calumny spread by these people; but for the sake of better moral atmosphere all around, and for the sake of his mission, he often exposed the hollowness of their propaganda, and this had a telling effect not only in silencing his opponents, but also in advancing the cause he had in mind. In illustration of this, we may refer to certain facts. The *Appeal-Avalanche* of January 21, 1894 had the following comment to make: 'It has been the supreme effort of Christian America to enlighten the beclouded minds of heathen India, but it seems that the Oriental splendour of Kananda's religion has eclipsed the beauty of the old-time Christianity, as taught by our parents, and will find a rich field in which to thrive in the minds of some of the better educated of America.' Most often, the missionaries were not silenced by any deliberate effort on his part, but his very personality and the liberal ideas he preached were so forceful, that falsehood had to beat a retreat willy-nilly. The *Appeal-Avalanche* itself shows how he avoided direct conflict: 'Kananda has no quarrel with the faith of the Western world, as he calls Americans. While he sees much in their mode of life, their social and religious institutions, to disagree with, he does not criticize them, unless called upon to do so. He is here rather to cull from American soil ideas and natural aid that will advance his people.' The result of it all, as noted by Mrs. Burke, was that 'Swamiji, with one stroke, absolved India of "Mahatmaism" as well as "heathenism"—a stroke which neither the Theosophists, nor the missionaries thanked him for'. Thus it is that Dr Grossman remarked: 'After listening to his truly natural religion, one is not quite sure but there is more of heathenism in this land of ours than ever we charged to his people.' In exposing the tricks of the missionaries who poisoned the young minds with false and repelling pictures, songs, and fables, he pleaded that American morality itself required that the next generation be saved from such falsehood. The net result was that the American public ceased to support the foreign missions as liberally as they had done, and conversions in India fell down appreciably.' The more positive gain in the West, however, was that the Western mind, as a whole, became more receptive to his message, and a select group there accepted him almost as a new prophet. And India gained immensely, for the Western world realized for the first time that what the undeveloped countries required was not more religion, but more bread and the wherewithal to raise their standard of living.

IV

His message in the West was, in a sense, unique. His broadness of mind naturally appealed to all liberal-minded people. The *Winconsin State Journal* of November 1, 1893, for instance, wrote: 'Pagan though he be, Christianity may well follow many of his teachings. His creed is as wide as the universe, taking in all religions, and accepting truth wherever it may be found. Bigotry and superstition and idle ceremony, he declared, have no place in "the religion of India".' He gave them, a better and more comprehensive view of life, philosophy, and religion, without consciously antagonizing anybody. If he seemed to hit out now and then, it was like an irate child, which found no other method of expressing disgust at unfair treatment than by crying and throwing about its hands and feet, which acts may harm itself more than anybody else.

The enlightened and devout Americans could easily appreciate such sentiments as: 'We of the Hindu faith believe in worshipping God for love's sake, not for what He gives us, but because God is love, and no nation, no people, no religion has God, until it is willing to worship Him for love's sake.'

The need of accepting his universal conception about God was put thus by Dr. Grossman: 'Let us learn from the Hindu the lesson that God lives and reigns, now and ever, that God is in every flower of the field; in every breath of this air; in every throb of our blood.'

He never spoke a word against Jesus Christ, rather he showed the highest love and reverence for him. But he criticized the superstitions, dogmas, and bigotry that degraded Christianity of those days. And all fair-minded people conceded that the criticism was justified. In his characteristic way he declared: 'If your missionary does not follow Christ, what right has he to call himself a Christian? We want missionaries of Christ.'

The whole effect of his preaching was ably summed up by the editor of *Sunday News Tribune* of March 18, 1894, in the following words: 'It is more than probable that the placid Hindu has taught us a lesson and that the fruit of all his work here will be a broadening of our sympathies and some enlargement of our ability to comprehend views upon important subjects that are quite out of the beaten path in which our thoughts and opinions have been accustomed to travel.' And the *Moines Daily News* of November 29, 1893 wrote: 'Vivekananda and his cause found a place in the hearts of all true Christians.' The American poetess Harriet Monroe wrote: 'His vision entrusted to our fresh energies his hope of a more united and better world.'

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: HIS IMMORTAL MESSAGE

BY H. H. SRI JAYA CHAMARAJA WADIYAR

The century in which Swami Vivekananda was born in India was full of the ferment of a cultural renaissance which manifested itself in several religio-social movements like Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society, and the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement. This was, in a way, the result of the vital contact between Indian and Western cultural values. The dreaming East was awakened, as it were, to new possibilities of achievement by the dynamic West. Age-long Indian spirituality lay slumbering in a hoary tradition. Western ideas began to influence the thought of the land, and there was even a deliberate onslaught on the traditional values of India. The culture of the West almost took an aggressive form and India had to take a similar attitude to meet the challenge—an attitude which was characterized by Sister Nivedita as 'aggressive Hinduism'. Here 'aggressive' only meant dynamic and active, not offensive or intolerant. This movement needed new messiahs who could propagate the new gospel of Hinduism with vigour and foresight. Awakened India found a new voice in that Lion of Vedānta, Swami

Vivekananda, who left a profound and deep impression on modern India and the West.

Swami Vivekananda was the child of the new age that had dawned in India. He had imbibed Western learning which stimulated him to rethink about the concepts of his own culture. He hungered for knowledge which he avidly devoured from wherever it came. He was athirst for knowing some of those things which his ancestors had pondered upon and made their own. The philosophies of the West, that of Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, and others, gave him no abiding satisfaction. He found a serious lacuna in their thinking. It seemed to him that they merely touched the fringes of the problem. They left him disappointed and frustrated. They did not allay his deep thirst for a knowledge that liberates. His soul was in rebellion against conventions and customs of his own country which happened to conceal in a crust the real fertilizing stream that flowed beneath it. He was like a person who is described by the Upaniṣads as one who roamed about on the surface of the earth not knowing that a treasure lay hidden underneath his feet: *'Tadyathā'pi hiraṇyanidhiṁ nihitam akṣetrajñā uparyupari sañcaranto na vindeyuḥ'* (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VIII.3.2).

He began to hunt for this hidden treasure. He went to teachers, professors, and *paṇḍitas*, seeking an answer to questions that surged in his breast. However, the door, for which he found no key, remained shut. Sad at heart, he brooded for days on end on the riddle of life, went through the dark night of the soul, and was filled with darkness and despair. No ray of light penetrated the dense darkness that concealed the truth. We have known in history of great men and women passing through this anguish of the soul as a prelude to seeing the light. Gautama the Buddha passed through this agony before illumination dawned on him. Jesus Christ saw the light after an 'encircling gloom'. Prophet Mohammed had the light of heaven bursting out on him before God vouchsafed to him the revelation. Swami Vivekananda's own teacher Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa had the vision of the Deity only when he felt he could no longer continue to live without that redeeming vision. This is how the great teachers of mankind followed the gleam which led them onward in the precipitous path on which they chose to walk, a path which the Upaniṣad likens to a 'razor's edge—*kṣurasya dhārā niśitā duratyayā*' (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, III.14).

In this precipitous search for the ultimate truth, Swami Vivekananda, the disillusioned intellectual, came upon an almost unlettered mystic, who had made his home on the fringes of Calcutta, on the banks of the sacred river Gaṅgā. This mystic was unostentatious in appearance and odd-looking. His hair was unkempt. He was unshaven. His body was half-covered by the fragment of a cloth. He was so careless of his personal appearance. But an unearthly light shone through his luminous eyes. He was extraordinarily tender and compassionate. Swami Vivekananda was strangely fascinated by this man, who saw in him the vision of Nārāyaṇa. The words that the master spoke strangely stirred him to his depths. He felt he was in the presence of one who had an aura around him of what Rudolf Otto describes as the 'numinous' which strikes one with a feeling of awe and reverence. Here was religion which was realization. Religion ceased here to be merely doctrine and dogma. It became realization or *sākṣātkāra,* the only thing that is capable of giving life and reality to religion which would otherwise merely deteriorate into a soulless ritual and a sapless routine. Such a religion as this, which was derived from one who himself had realized it, gave to Swami Vivekananda's life a new tone and temper. He underwent a remarkable transformation within himself at the divine touch of this extraordinary man. All doubts that formerly corroded his soul came to be dissolved. All uncertainty ceased. His quest for certainty came near fulfilment. This event of great significance in the life of foremost intellectual in India was not only of tremendous importance in the life of Swami Vivekananda as an individual, but also came to be invested with an extraordinary significance for the whole of the Indian people, nay, for the whole world as later events proved.

Fired with his Master's flame which he described with such vividness and zeal in his essay on 'My Master', this great disciple swept like a whirlwind over the whole subcontinent from one end to the other, visiting the different parts of India, its great cities, its temples and places of learning. He was yet an obscure figure, though here and there those who came into closer touch with him knew somewhat of the fire that was raging in him. He exhorted the people to shed their weakness, their superstitions, their faint-heartedness, their inertia. 'Do not confuse your *tamas* with *sattva*', he roared. 'Arise, awake, stop not till the Goal is reached' was his continuous exhortation. Prince and peasant, pundit and philosopher, the monks and the laity were all made astir when they heard this new voice which appeared like calling them on to a new life and a new era. He recalled to them the golden age of the dim past, the age of Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the age of the Buddha and Mahāvīra, the age of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. It looked as if he made the people realize the presence of a new *avatāra* in their midst in fulfilment of the prophecy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā* (IV.7,8). To uproot evil and to re-establish righteousness was the supreme task to which he called all people in India, young and old, rich or poor, scholar and peasant. The world is witness to the fact that, in the wake of moral depressions, enthusiastic fervours have reawakened mankind periodically. This message reverberated in Swami Vivekananda's powerful voice with a new ring of truth. He called on all those who were in quest of religious life to abandon their self-righteousness and seclusion and plunge themselves into the world's work in order that they may redeem themselves. His slogan became '*ātmano mokṣārthaṁ jagaddhitāya ca*'. One's own liberation is wrapped up with the redemption of the world.

During his peregrinations in India as a *parivrājaka*, he happened to visit the State of Mysore over which reigned my noble ancestor, His Highness Sri Chamarajendra Wadiyar of revered memory. This was before he left India to go abroad. The Maharaja and the people of the Mysore State are proud of this fact that they have had in some measure the privilege of contributing their humble mite to render it possible for Swami Vivekananda to go abroad carrying the lighted torch of his Master who represented in himself the entire gamut of India's spirituality. It is this message of Vedānta as universal religion, which broke all barriers that divided mankind, that he carried beyond the shores of India and impressed the Western world with the truth of the spirituality of India. Till then it was practically a sealed book to people in America and England. To them, India represented a land of the heathen steeped in darkness and ignorance, to be mercifully made regenerate. The missionaries of the West took it as their sacred duty to carry the teachings of the gospel of Christianity the like of which, they thought, we did not possess. At the Chicago Parliament of Religions, Swami Vivekananda made his debut and electrified the whole atmosphere. Some journals gave it as their opinion as to how absurd it was to carry religion and spirituality to a land which produced a Swami Vivekananda and gave birth to philosophy and religion which his teachings brought to light. This 'ochre-robed' *sannyāsin* spoke in ringing tones of the faith of his ancestors from the platform of the Parliament of Religions. He spoke to them of the glorious spiritual heritage of the people of India, a heritage from which the whole world may draw an inspiration for noble living. Swami Vivekananda made the reputation of India soar sky-high by his lofty utterances. He made numerous disciples who walked humbly in his foot-steps. Among them were men and women of the West who took to the order of *sannyāsa* and dedicated themselves to the service of India. His disciple, Sister Nivedita, who wrote the excellent book, *The Master as I Saw Him,* about Swami Vivekananda, threw herself heart and soul into the cause of the upliftment of Indian women and children. She wrote books like *The Web of Indian Life, Cradle Tales of Hinduism, Dharma and Religion,* and others which helped the educated people of India to a reappraisal of their own civilization and culture. They fostered a sense of self-respect and legitimate pride in their ancient heritage. Tasks of social reconstruction became as much a religious as a social duty. Mysticism and charity began to walk in unison. A new social conscience was awakened and with it a new era of social progress commenced. Swami Vivekananda desired that Indian society must adopt itself to changing conditions without surrendering its excellent roots in India's characteristic genius of the synthesis of cultures and spiritual regeneration of man. He created a new order of *sannyāsins* who would be responsible for running educational institutions, hospitals and hostels, homes for the mentally afflicted, *āśramas* for those who longed for peace of mind and tranquillity of the soul without which mere worldly glory or prosperity would turn into ashes. In Swami Vivekananda, we find the giant of India waking up. In him we find uncoiled the Kuṇḍalinī Śakti that lay coiled up in its slumbering depths. This was the renaissance of Śakti, a power which can conquer the world by its internal strength, a Śakti, to acquire which has been the goal of her national life. This Śakti was the object of worship of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and his great disciple Swami Vivekananda. The Swami with his *ātma-śakti* or spiritual power charged the generations that came after him with a sense of morality and good life. Swami Vivekananda was impatient and intolerant of any fear and weakness. He was the adherent of the Upaniṣadic saying '*nāyamātmā balahīnena labhyaḥ*' (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad,* III.2.3), which means that the Self cannot be obtained by a man without strength. This strength is not that of arms and armaments; it is the spiritual strength of the Soul. Let us, therefore, invoke the spirit of Swami Vivekananda who reminded us of the great truth taught in our ancient Vedāntic texts.

Swami Vivekananda's gospel of Neo-Vedānta is new and yet old. Its foundations lie deeply imbedded in the sacred scriptures of India and its great masters of interpretation like Śaṅkara. The vision of the unity of the universe which is no other than Brahma-darśana is the core and quintessence of the Vedānta. The light of this vision clears away all fissiparous tendencies, all division and strife, and all processes of decay and disintegration. The more we approximate to the truth of the unity of things, to the union of the individual and the universal, of the Ātman and Brahman, the more will we be reaching the fulfilment of human perfection. This 'the human soul is potentially divine' is the core of Swami Vivekananda's teaching. There is no gainsaying the fact that the results of this supreme vision as it implements itself in social action will make India really strong and free in the modern world.

The unison of vision and action is the greatest factor of importance in the present context of the world. Aimless, hectic, and hustling activity which lacks the steady light of meditation at its back will lead to barren results. Similarly, contemplation and meditation, however valuable they may be for a fruitful life, remain truncated, unless they are made to animate and inspire all outward activity. Contemplation and action must be harmonized. Without this harmony, we are lost. This is the valuable teaching of Swami Vivekananda for the modern world.

The world is hungering for a philosophy of this kind. The progress of science and technology must proceed *pari passu* with a true religious spirit. Science and spirituality must mingle. Science is blind without spirituality. Spirituality enables us to have a clear vision of the future and fills us with hope, courage, and a spirit of adventure. In the perspective of modern thought, we have in Swami Vivekananda the embodiment of a wisdom imparted by India's ancient sages and saints and an embodiment of a sanity of outlook and wisdom of life without which man loses his hold over the supreme human values. Swami Vivekananda may be looked upon as an immortal bridge between the West and the East, between the ancient and the modern, between the internal and the external, and between the good, the true and the beautiful. Furthermore, in Swami Vivekananda, we find the corrective to the mere pragmatism and humanism of the West which would seem to wither away, unless their roots strike deep into the spiritual life of man, that is, unless they are rooted in the vivid realization of an ultimate Reality which India is fond of naming Brahman. A James and a Dewey, a Russell and a Whitehead, a Bradley and a Bergson find a supplementation here in the Neo-Vedānta of Swami Vivekananda which is imminently needed to round off the jagged edges of their philosophies.

These hundred years that have elapsed since the birth of Swami Vivekananda have been eventful years in the history of India and the rest of the world. India has become politically free, but has yet to make great leeway in economic and social progress. She has to struggle on with internal disorder and external aggression the latter of which has unfortunately been thrust on her. But her soul is unconquerable and invincible due to the guidance of master spirits like Swami Vivekananda and other philosophers. As was pointed out by one of the Swami's disciples: 'Swami Vivekananda was an epitome of all that was great and good in the India of the past, and all that is also potentially great and good in her. With Śaṅkara's intellect he combined Buddha's heart, Christ's renunciation and the Prophet of Arabia's spirit of equality, and the result of this holy confluence will, in time, flood the whole world.'

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AT VARANASI

By Swami Bhaswarananda

After the consolidation of the monastic order of Sri Ramakrishna Deva at Baranagore, Swami Vivekananda felt an urge to set out on a pilgrimage to the northern *tīrthas*. His first visit was to Varanasi, traditionally sacred to the Hindus, situated on the western bank of the holy Gaṅgā. This is the place where Sri Ramakrishna had the vision of Lord Śiva and Mother Annapūrṇā and it was here that Buddha, Śaṅkara, and Caitanya meditated and preached. The city was made holy by numerous men and women of the past who realized spiritual perfection. All these were undoubtedly very attractive to him.

During his visits to Varanasi at different times, a few interesting and educative incidents took place. In his first visit, Swamiji stayed at the Ashrama of Dwarkadas who introduced Swamiji to the well-known Pandit and Bengali writer Sri Bhudev Chandra Mukhopadhyaya. Both of them held long discussion and conversation. When they dispersed, the Panditji remarked: 'Wonderful! Such vast experience and insight at such an early age! I am sure he will be a great man.' He also visited the famous saint Trailanga Swami who used to remain absorbed in profound meditation. He also met Swami Bhaskarananda, a celebrated ascetic of great learning. Both of them discussed the question of the conquest of lust and gold. Swamiji referred to the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna laying emphasis on the renunciation of lust and gold as the indispensable condition for the realization of God. Bhaskaranandaji contradicted: 'No one can completely renounce lust and gold.' Swamiji replied boldly: 'There have been many saints who have done so, and I myself have seen one (meaning Sri Ramakrishna) who had completely overcome lust and gold.' Swami Bhaskarananda did not agree with him, and at this, Swamiji left the place in a mood of dissatisfaction.

For the second time, Swamiji visited Varanasi and met Babu Pramadadas Mitra, the great Sanskrit scholar. It was through Swami Akhandananda that he came to know of Swamiji. Swamiji and Pramadadas Babu became close friends. Swamiji had a lot of correspondence with him in order to be thoroughly acquainted with the solutions of intricate problems of Hindu Śāstras.

In 1888, when Swamiji returned to the Baranagore Math after his pilgrimage to the north, he made arrangements for the study of Vedānta literature by the inmates of the Math. As the Math was too poor to buy books, Swamiji borrowed some Vedānta literature from Babu Pramadadas Mitra together with a copy of Pāṇini's grammar for the *gurubhāis* so that they would acquire a fair knowledge of Sanskrit to study the Vedas.

While at the Math, Swamiji was very often anxious to go to Varanasi and spend the time in the sacred city of Lord Viśvanātha. The presence of Pramadadas there was an added attraction.

In the last part of December 1889, Swamiji left for Vaidyanath on his way to Varanasi. 'My idea', wrote Swamiji from Vaidyanath, 'is to remain there for some time and to watch how Viśvanātha and Annapūrṇā deal it out to my lot. And my resolve is something like either to lay down my life or realize my ideal —so help me, Lord of Kāśi.'

So, from Vaidyanath, Swamiji went to Varanasi and stayed with his friend Pramadadas Mitra. He spent hours with him in discussion of spiritual and cultural topics. Swamiji, however, became very eager to see the snow-capped Himalayas and so he could not prolong his stay at Varanasi. As he was taking leave of Pramadadas Babu, he said: 'When I shall return here next time, I shall burst upon society like a bomb-shell and it will follow me like a dog.' He did not return to this sacred city until he had stirred up the world to the enlightening message of unity and divinity of human soul realized by the Indian sages of the past.

In 1890, the Ramakrishna Order, which was in the making at Baranagore Math, was in great financial difficulties. At this time Swamiji was much perturbed by the thought that something should be done to perpetuate the memory of Sri Ramakrishna in Bengal, the land of his birth. The erection of a suitable temple in his name on the bank of Gaṅgā was the idea. In this connection, Swamiji wrote a letter to Pramadadas Babu of Varanasi on 26th May 1890 from which a few extracts given below reveal Swamiji's affection for his *guru* and *gurubhāis*.

Swamiji appealed to Pramadadas Babu to raise subscription from his friends there at Varanasi and thus help in the erection of the memorial. 'I am', the letter says, 'Sri Ramakrishna's servant and am willing even to steal and rob, if by doing so, I can perpetuate his name in the land of his birth and *sādhanā* and help a little his disciples to practise his great ideals of renunciation and service. It would be the greatest pity if the memorial shrine could not be raised on the land of his birth and *sādhanā*! The condition of Bengal is pitiable. The people here are unable even to understand what renunciation truly means —only luxury, sensuality, and selfishness are eating into the vitals of the race. May God infuse the spirit of renunciation and selflessness into this land!'

On one occasion, Swamiji wrote to Swami

Abhedananda to come to Varaṇasi for a change and requested Pramadadas Babu to look after him. The protracted illness of Swami Abhedananda compelled him at last to go to Varanasi. In order to satisfy his inner desire for *tapasyā*, Swamiji hurried to Varanasi as the guest of Pramadadas Babu. After making every arrangement for the care of Swami Abhedananda, he settled himself in Pramadadas Babu's garden and devoted his entire time to the practice of austerities. At this time, he received the heart-rending news of the passing away of Balaram Bose who was one of the beloved disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. Swamiji was shocked at this sorrowful news. Pramadadas Babu was surprised to see a monk so upset by the news of death. But Swamiji said: 'We are not dry monks. What! Do you think that because a man is a *sannyāsin*, he has no heart?' With the intention of bringing solace to the bereaved family of Balaram Babu, he left Varanasi for Calcutta.

His last visit to Varanasi came about in February 1902 when he was accorded a very grand reception by the citizens. He was guest at the house of Raja Kalikrishna Thakur. Swamiji was accompanied by Mr. Okakura of Japan, who had come to invite Swamiji to attend a Parliament of Religions to be held in his country. Swamis Bodhananda, Nirbhayananda, Niranjanananda, and Shivananda had already arrived earlier at Varanasi for making preparations for Swami Vivekananda's reception. A host of distinguished persons including *mahantas* (heads of monasteries) and orthodox *paṇḍitas* came to Swamiji and discussed with him many social problems and appreciated his solutions for them and his ideas of reformation of Hindu culture. Here Swamiji, in a spirit of archaeological research, said about Varanasi that even the oldest records had proved it as the great place of Śiva worship.

It was during this visit in 1902 that Udai Pratap Singh, the philanthropic and pious Raja of Bhinga met Swamiji. The Raja was living in his garden at Durgakund as a monk (*gṛha-sannyāsin*) with a vow never to move from the garden. When he came to know of Swamiji's arrival in the city, he was very anxious to meet him. Despite his vow, he desired to leave the place and come to Swamiji's place. In the meantime, Swamiji came to know of it from another Swami, a messenger from the Raja. Next day, Swamiji himself paid a visit to the Raja. The Raja was highly pleased and a conversation on various topics took place. The Raja requested Swamiji to start some sort of activity in this holy place, and he offered a sum of Rs. 500 for the purpose. Swamiji later on instructed Swami Shivanandaji to start some work for the spread of Vedāntism. This was how the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama of Varanasi originated.

In regard to this visit of Swamiji, Swami Sadashivananda wrote in his reminiscences: 'The Gopal Lal Villa where Swami Vivekananda was residing while at Varanasi in 1902 was five miles away from the Sevashrama where we lived. We went to see the Swami daily and occasionally spent the night there. One day, in my absence, Swami Shivananda requested the Swami to give us initiation to which he consented, but fixed no date for it. One day Swamiji asked us to stay for the night as the next day was fixed for initiation.

'In the morning we took our bath, prepared ourselves for the occasion, and waited in front of his room. The doors opened even before our expectation and Swamiji appeared there with a face illumined with divine fire, and with peculiar accent asked us to come one by one. As soon as I went near him, he remarked: "Oh! you have come first! well, well, come along with me, my boy." There we moved on to another small room where there were two small carpets on the floor. He took his seat on one and I was on the other. Within a few minutes, Swamiji entered into deep *samādhi*. After a while, descending to normal consciousness, he asked me to think of him; and as I did so, he said:

"Now think of Sri Ramakrishna and transform me into him and then him into Ganeśa. Ganeśa is the ideal of *sannyāsins*." I stood there initiated and the Swami asked me to send the next aspirant. I went out and sent Charu Babu (Shubhananda) who was initiated in the same way, and next, Sri Haridas Chatterjee.

'Amongst us there was a young worker, very lean and thin, who attracted the Swami's notice. How kind he was to us can best be illustrated by the instance of this boy. He was very sickly. One day he went to see the Swami who enquired about him and asked him to dine daily with him: "My lad, you are not very strong and you have to work in the Sevashrama—you must eat well. You must come daily to dine with me—at least you must take your noon-day meal here with me." '

During this time, the old and venerable Mahantaji of Kedarnath Temple invited Swamiji to accept *bhikṣā* along with his followers. Swamiji accepted his invitation. Next morning, at about ten o'clock, Swamiji, Swami Shivananda, and others went to the Math of the Mahanta. The Mahanta Maharaj then treated Swamiji and others to a sumptuous feast. Then, he got an ochre robe and wrapped it around Swamiji's loins over his '*gerua*' cloth and a similar cloth over his body. The Mahanta, being very happy, remarked: 'Today, I have fed a true "*daṇḍī*" *sannyāsin* (Vedāntist). You are Śiva incarnate. You have come for the salvation of mankind.' At the request of Mahantaji, Swamiji and others went inside the temple of Sri Kedarnath. In honour of Swamiji, *ārati* of Sri Kedarnath was performed, although it was not the usual hour for it. Swamiji was in a profound spiritual mood. Everyone else there seemed to be overpowered by his divine presence. All came out of the temple and Swamiji gradually came to himself and returned to the house of Kalikrishna Thakur.

Swamiji, whose health was not good at the time, was under the treatment of a physician. This physician used to come to Swamiji very often and talked with him on a particular system of theology newly evolved in the country. He was one day speaking dogmatically of its founder and its service to our country. Swamiji listened on without any comment or contradiction. Finding him going beyond the limit, Swamiji became serious and said in a resounding voice: 'The foreigners are the teachers in every way of this country. Only religion remained. But you want to give them precedence even in this. You have made Europe your *guru* and have become their hypnotized slaves. Do you think India has fallen so low that you must import even religious practices for her? Is it a thing to be proud of or should you be ashamed to own them? I have not come here to make ovations and give lectures. I am ill and I want quiet and rest. If I wish, this very night I can bring the founder of your pet sect and all Benares (Varanasi) at my feet, but I do not want to use the Divine power in this way unnecessarily and so I have not done it.' The doctor who, a little while ago, did not place Swamiji spiritually above the ordinary level was then sincerely sorry and changed his topic. Swamiji resumed his calmness in a moment.

Mr. Kelkar, the well-known patriot was in Varanasi at that time. One evening he came to meet Swamiji who lay on a bed as he was ill. Mr. Kelkar paid respect to Swamiji as one would do to his own *guru* and took his seat on a carpet. Their conversation went on in English on the topics of India and her distress; politics, social reforms, and many other things were discussed. Swamiji, deeply distressed at heart, said: 'What is the good of India being in this degeneration and extreme poverty any longer? Every moment she is suffering a hell; no food and no clothes: dishonour and distress is her lot; she breathes—that is all the sign of life she has got. It is veritably a hellish fire in which she is being consumed slowly and certainly. Was it not far better that she was extinct from the face of the earth?' At the end he told Mr. Kelkar that mere copying of foreign countries would not bear much fruit nor the heartless foreign politics of other countries would help us. Only a spontaneous development from inside, following the ancient traditions, could lift India. Mr. Kelkar was much impressed with what he had heard and with folded hands in respect, he took leave of Swamiji that night.

Inspired by the teachings of Swamiji some young men of Varanasi gathered together and discussed how to put the teachings of Swamiji into practice. One of them one day found an old woman lying in the street, helpless and crying for help. He approached the sick woman, picked her up and gave shelter in the terrace of a house nearby. One gentleman came and offered a four anna piece for a little milk to be given to the patient. Being little bit refreshed, she was sent to a Government Hospital where she recovered. Then the young man, having tasted of the pure joy of selfless service, invited other friends to continue this kind of service to other destitute and helpless men and women of the city. Thus they rented a small room to accommodate and serve patients. This spirit of humanitarian service attracted the attention of the generous public. These young men formed a Poor Men's Relief Association and organized permanent relief to the sufferings of local people and the pilgrims in general. Of these young men, Jamini, Charu Chandra (later Swami Shubhananda), and Kedarnath (later Swami Achalananda) took the leading part. As the work grew, a small house was rented in 1900 at Jangambari. Later on, the work had to be shifted to a more commodious house at Ramapura in 1901. In February 1902, when Swamiji visited Varanasi, this group of young men approached Swamiji for advice and instruction. He addressed them thus: 'Who are you to render relief? Nothing beyond service is within your scope. Removing all egoism, relinquishing all desire, follow the path of truth and love, serve man as God. Work in this spirit and you will reach the goal. Not only will you thus make the best use of life, but you will also do immense good to your society and country. My sons, name your Association "The Home of Service". Regard every pice collected for the poor as your life-blood. Such noble work can be carried on properly and permanently by those only who have renounced selfish desires.'

Swamiji was so much impressed by the sincerity and earnestness of these young men and with the future scope of the good work started by them that he himself dictated an appeal for the Home of Service and this appeal had the desired effect. The Home grew rapidly with the sincere co-operation of the generous public. Now, it is a full-fledged hospital, having an indoor department of 103 free beds and an out-patient department catering to the medical and surgical needs of about 900 patients daily. Attached to it, there are two invalid homes for men and women.

Swami Vivekananda did not return to Varanasi again in his mortal frame. This eternal city of Lord Śiva is intimately connected with his life. 'Varanasi has for me a special attraction', he once said. It was here that, at the temple of Vīreśvara, prayers were offered for Swami Vivekananda's advent, it was here that he came again and again for *tapasyā* and quietude, and it was here that he came on his last pilgrimage. About this holy city, Swami Vivekananda wrote: 'In other sacred places, people go to purify themselves from sin, and their connection with these places is casual and of a few days' duration. In this, the most ancient and living centre of Aryan religious activity, there come men and women, and as a rule old and decrepit, waiting to pass unto Eternal Freedom, through the greatest of all sanctifications, death under the shadow of temple of the Lord of the universe.'

THE MESSAGE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

By Dr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar

Soon after I began to study in the college, there were friends and elders of mine who used to tell us stories of the days in 1893, when Narendra Dutta—Swami Vivekananda, as he then was—often sat on the pials of the houses of Triplicane and began to discuss with learned pundits in Sanskrit—and some of them in Madras were very learned indeed—the great truths of our religious teaching. The exposition, the dialectic skill he showed, and the masterly way in which he analysed what even to those well-educated and learned pundits were unfathomable depths of Sanskrit literature and law, greatly attracted attention from all and sundry, and it was an evening function, well-worthy of the sight of the gods themselves to see great professors of colleges and learned folk sitting round him in the pial and trying dialectic debates with him on the meaning which should be given to this or that particular *śloka* of Patañjali or of the *Gītā*. His worth was tested and he became famous and had all the help that was necessary to send him to Chicago.

The tremendous sensation he created at the World's Parliament of Religions and the wild wave of enthusiasm that ran through tens of thousands of people when this orange-robed young figure of thirty got up and addressed a distinguished gathering, in those immortal words, 'Sisters and Brothers of America', giving that touch of universal brotherhood, the keynote of the religion which he expounded, are matters which we love to read over and over again. Forty years after that first Parliament of Religions, a similar one was held in connection with the Great Fair in Chicago in 1933, and by a curious combination of circumstances, I happened to be at that Fair and, of course, took the opportunity of attending the Second Parliament of Religions. The magic personality of Swami Vivekananda was not there—he who used to be reserved as the last speaker, the one magnet who would attract all and keep the entire audience bound to their seats.

I missed that charm, that magnetic and great source of influence and of light which welded together that happy mass of religious heads, scientists, and students who had gathered in the First Parliament, but I met there old men and old women, citizens of America who still remembered the First Parliament of Religions and whose minds and hearts were impressed indelibly for all time to come with the immortal features of Swami Vivekananda and the immortal words that he preached to the great audience.

So much has been said of Swamiji's life and teachings. What was it that he intended to do? His early life, his coming into contact with Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, his first tendencies, his doubts, unbelief in all superstitions—they have all been referred to; but it was later that the golden touch of his Master transmuted the collegian into a sage and a saint; of that I would like to speak.

'Whenever there is a case of vice triumphing, then I am born again and again to rejuvenate the world', said the great Lord. I do not want to enter into any controversy as to who was and who was not an *avatāra*. But I venture to repeat what Swami Vivekananda himself so often said that the race of *avatāras* is not yet exhausted and will never be exhausted. Time after time, these great souls are born in all climes and in all periods whenever God feels the need for fulfilling aims and bringing back the world into His ways again. So was Narendra Dutta and so his mission first and foremost was to his own countrymen to tell them to have confidence in themselves, to ask them to re-read their Bibles, to make them realize the eternal verities of their religion, not to be carried away by cultures from the outside world—a

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that was half understood—but to drink deep of the spring which their ancestors left for them. He carried that mission through the length and breadth of India, in his own speeches from Colombo to Almora in the triumphal tour that he made after his return from that Parliament of Chicago. He was a humble *sādhu*, unknown, with no pretensions to high aristocracy, holding no position in life, wearing the simple orange robes of one who has, to a large extent, given up all that is held materially valuable in this world, and his procession was one which kings and emperors and Fuehrers and Duces may envy for all time.

He was in touch with the masses. His soul responded to their crying need, and as he went from Colombo to Almora, halting at several places which were fortunate enough to receive his visit, he expounded the truth that lay in him. First and foremost, he told them that no religion was superior to another and that all religions have the same cardinal principle of truth. That is, indeed, what the Lord has said long long before: as several rivers flow and ultimately merge themselves in the great ocean, so all religions lead to the same eternal and inevitable goal. In one of his speeches he says: 'Hinduism, Christianity, Islam—they are all religions. I respect them all. I believe in them all. But I do not believe in conversion from one religion to another. You put the seed in the ground. There is the earth; there is water; and what do all these give you? Not the earth, not the water, not even the seed, but a plant which resembles none of these things, which is a product of something quite different from the elements in which it was placed. So it is the soul that derives the divine inspiration.'

I remember the glorious passages in one of his speeches where he speaks of toleration. This was a great land, the eternal *puṇyabhūmi* which, age after age, century after century, in its own borders through its great religion, Hinduism, has preached and practised the doctrine of toleration. Here came the refugees from all the religions in the world, persecuted by fanatics who understood less of their religion than they thought they did, refugees from the West Christian Church to the Syrian Church of the East, and then came refugees from the Zoroastrian religion and from all and sundry, and there was no question of this great land of God refusing them shelter; nay, more than that, of giving encouragement to all these people of all religions, men persecuted for their religious faith, driven from their hearths and homes, well-nigh treated worse than brutes. We may take some satisfaction in the fact that these sages like Swami Vivekananda have still retained that dominant principle of Hinduism which realized that all men have the same divine essence in them, that all men are the parts of the same divinity and that, therefore, there is no religion higher than that which preaches the brotherhood of man.

If there was one book more than another which Swami Vivekananda constantly referred to, which I believe was a sort of inspiration perpetually to him, it was the *Bhagavad-Gītā* and, in more than one speech, you will find that he refers to this incident or that and draws the lesson which he feels proper. 'Resist not evil' is a canon which finds place in almost all religions. Its meaning is very often misunderstood. 'Resist not evil'—it is true. Swami Vivekananda explains what that means. It is not that lack of physical courage which makes man a coward before superior force. Swami Vivekananda was a fighter himself. He was one who knew not any kind of physical cowardice or moral cowardice. He had a perfectly developed physique. I heard stories when I was young of how he got into a first-class carriage of the then M. and S. M. Railway, wearing this orange garb, and somebody got in and asked Swamiji to get down and tried to abuse him. The Swamiji got up his powerful arm, forgetting for a moment the orange robes, took him by the grip of his neck, and threatened to throw him out. Just because he was a swami, just because he wore the orange robe, he never thought he should cover an overwhelming physical force, of which there was much in him. That is the lesson which Swami Vivekananda tried to force. He said it was no good to preach religion to a people who were starving for bread. They should have courage, physical courage—first of all, a sound body, and then, a sound mind.

Swami Vivekananda is a citizen of the world. His contribution will stay on for ever. His immortal soul pervades the whole universe. But India can claim rightly the proud privilege of having contributed so great a soul.

OUR PRICELESS POSSESSION

By Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji

It is difficult to do justice to a subject so vast, so deep, and so sacred as Vivekananda. To honour the memory of Vivekananda, is to see that Vivekananda does not become a mere memory, a matter of history, or of the dead past, but continues to be a living influence that would mould our thought and life. If we are all agreed as to this purpose, we cannot fulfil it except by studying the details of the life that flowered into perfection in Swami Vivekananda. The Swami was not, however, a Vivekananda at the start. He was Narendra Nath Dutt, a college student, surrounded by all the conditions of an ordinary life. It was his greatness as a mortal to achieve the immortal, like the lotus blooming into beauty out of slough and slime. The question is, how was Narendra Nath Dutt transformed into a 'Vivekananda'? Who was responsible for this transformation? Who was the Divine Alchemist who turned this raw metal into gold? It was Sri Ramakrishna, who achieved this miracle, he was the maker of Vivekananda. If we all believe in self-fulfilment as the sole and supreme objective of life, we must recognize that the first step towards it lies in each finding his *guru*, the *sadguru*, the Master, to whom he must surrender his life to be moulded by him. There can be no intellectual or spiritual progress without the teacher. This primary requisite of life is insisted on in all our Śāstras from the Vedas downwards. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* tells of a man blindfolded and unable to find his way back home in the district of Gandhāra but as soon as the bandage is removed from his eyes, he is able at once to find his way towards his destination. It is the *sadguru* who alone can open the eyes to the path of duty which leads to emancipation. But who is this *sadguru*? It is one who sees God and Truth as he sees an object of sense. At the congress of philosophers convened by King Janaka at the Court of Videha, the earliest learned conference of the world, it was left to a lady-philosopher named Gārgī to put the question to the leading philosopher of the times, named Yājñavalkya, whether he had seen Brahman as he saw a cow or a horse as we are told in the Upaniṣads (c. 900 B.C.). Sri Ramakrishna was such a realized soul; to his discipline Narendra Nath submitted himself with a whole-hearted devotion. Who now knows of the uttermost austerities to which he put himself in order to achieve the truths which were imparted to him by his Guru? It is the game in which we are more interested than the chase! The details of the *sādhanā* do not appear to be as interesting as the sight of *siddhi*. Who cares to study the arduous process by which Vivekananda was strenuously achieving the highest knowledge and enlightenment? There was no rest or sleep for him in his continuous quest of the ideal. God is aptly defined as the conquerer of sleep. It is His sleepless vigilance that sustains the universe. His slumber means the collapse of creation! The great Buddha achieved His enlightenment five years after he received his first teaching, and became finally a *Buddha* at the end of a forty days' fast, under the *bodhi tree,* the tree of Knowledge, at Gaya! The name Vivekananda finely indicates the particular stage of spiritual progress which he was able to attain as a result of his *sādhanā*. It was only after his attainment of supreme knowledge that Sri Ramakrishna allowed his pupil to engage in external activities in the life of a teacher. The status of a teacher or a leader must await self-fulfilment. Otherwise, it will be like the blind leading the blind.

What was this supreme Knowledge which Vivekananda had lived to achieve? It was the knowledge of the Ātman, of Brahman as the sole and supreme Reality. He did not care for the half-truths and intermediate truths which make up the body of knowledge, for which the modern world stands. He boldly stood for the knowledge of immortality as the only objective to be aimed at by mortals. But how can a mortal achieve the immortal? The process is very simple. It is the pursuit by the mortal of the Immortal, the pursuit of what is imperishable in preference to the perishable, the fleeting, and the evanescent. As individuals we are always losing the proper sense of proportion and perspective by which the small appears to be great, and the great small, the interests of the moment more momentous than the abiding interests of the soul. We are all living as individuals. The individual is a lapse from the Absolute! It is a fall of the Soul! The individual soul is disjointed from Over-soul, and the result is death. Individuation is death. The individual dies, but the Whole lives. There is no death for the Whole or the Absolute. Therefore, to escape from the clutches of death, to conquer death, to become a *mṛtyuñjaya,* one must embrace the Absolute and the Universal. One must get rid of the sense of the individual, must cease to think and live in terms of the individual. He must think in terms of the Universal, so as to rise above the world of individuals, the world of differences which separate individual units from one another. There are, however, stages in this upward progress towards the Absolute. First, the individual has to get over what is called the *dehātmabodha,* the sense of the individual's identity with the body. The next stage is that of *deśātmabodha* by which the individual thinks not in terms of his petty self, but in terms of his country and his people. Thus nationalism is a necessary stage in man's religious progress. Therefore, Vivekananda naturally became one of the foremost nationalists of his day. He linked up religion with politics, nationalism with spirituality. He preached the doctrine of *Nara-Nārāyaṇa* and *Daridra-Nārāyaṇa* whereby the service of man, and relief of his suffering are recognized as the best modes of worshipping God. For God is as much in the poor as in the rich, in the lowly as in the great, in the tiniest twig, and in the minutest animalcule, as in the immeasurable solar systems and the stars of the first magnitude.

Besides thus preaching a vigorous nationalism, a puissant patriotism as a part of the Hindu's religion, which offers worship to the mother country as a Deity, the great Mother of all mothers, the Goddess-Mother of the Hindu's spiritual culture, Vivekananda stood out as an embodiment of a purified Hinduism, a Hinduism purged of its impurities and abuses, which are not of its essence. He was an embodiment of the religion that is founded upon character and not upon mere external forms, rituals, and ceremonies. It is *brahmacarya* that forms the physical and moral foundation of Brahma-jñāna. Thus, in his view, Hinduism has no place for untouchability or the narrowness of caste. All are equal citizens in the kingdom of the Spirit. His clarion-call still instigates in us a fight against illiteracy, untouchability, and other social evils which are eating into the vitals of Hinduism.

But, though nationalism or social service is to be cultivated as a part of religion, it must not be forgotten that there is a supreme need of concentrated contemplation of the Absolute as an indispensable means of self-realization. A life of meditation is to be combined with a life of disinterested social service like the two wings of a bird which must operate to sustain it in its upward flight. We at the modern age are too prone to modernize too much the message of Vivekananda as if he were a mere political leader. It is forgotten that his main strength lay in the depths of his soul. It was his soul force that sustained a life so rich in events and in external activities. There is hardly a life in which so much could be packed within its span so restricted. His life was cut short at the age of 39, but it is a priceless possession for India and humanity.

EDUCATION FOR A CHANGING SOCIETY

By Dr. (Mrs.) Sarasvati Chennakesavan

Since India became independent, there have been many changes in the life of the people. of the country. There has been tremendous progress in the economic and sociological aspects of life. The face of both the city and the village has changed and the direction of the change has been towards more sophistication and better standards of living. In the midst of this progress towards a better future, two facts stand out like disharmonious notes in a smooth flowing symphony. One is the slow disintegration of the very national unity which paved the way for independence and the other is the growth of a spirit of rebellion amongst the young. These two are, in a way, interconnected. When the older generation set the ball of disintegration rolling, perhaps, they little anticipated the situation when such a movement would crush with its gathering momentum the basic principles that should mould and shape the lives of the younger generation. If we have to fight this gigantic force of disintegration—that it exists cannot be doubted—then, the most urgent task is to evaluate the influences that are working on the lives of the young and make an effort to protect them from those which are undesirable. This would at least ensure that the future generations would be free from this cantankerous infection of separation. Such an appraisal of the present situation is possible only when we set aside all emotional bias and examine the problem.

Our society is a fast changing society, and as such, it can neither be simple nor stable. Naturally the young, being a product of such a society, cannot be merely facsimiles of the older generation. They have to be different, hold different views, and react appropriately to the challenges of a technological age. Yet at the same time, the tempo of evolution requires that the young human being be transformed from an amoral infant to a moral adult. The word 'moral' is here used in its derivative meaning to refer to those habits and customs which have been evolved during the ages and which reflect in them the patterns of a culture. A generation back the task of teaching a child such moral values devolved on the parents and the home environment, while the task of teaching secular and scientific facts was taken up by the schools. Today, this division of labour has almost disappeared due to various causes. The most important contributory factor to this is the changing pattern of the family institution. In the past, there was a close co-operation between the parents and the children in the discharge of the chores of daily routine in the family. They would be sharing in the small annoyances and triumphs of daily life. Thus there used to be a closer harmony and understanding between them. The parents could demonstrate to the child the wisdom and ethics of a course of an action by their own attitudes and behavioural patterns. Thus the child would learn the fundamental values of life more by example than by precept. But today, due to the changing conditions of life, this is not possible. The attitudes and behaviour of the parents, better suited to a slower and static society, are blatantly out of place in a fast moving complex society. One important difference is that the joint family system is fast disintegrating, and with it, many of its advantages in the nurturing of children. During the early age, the child learns by imitating its elders. The smaller the family unit, the lesser are the opportunities for such learning for the child. The remedy for this situation is not to set the clock back and revive the traditional pattern of family life so as to wedge the child into its set up. This is neither possible nor desirable, since the division of the family into smaller units is the result of the changing pattern of society and has come to stay.

The tragedy does not lie so much in the smaller unit of the family, but in the incapacity of such parents to mould the mental life of their children due to their economic situation. To maintain a certain standard of life, it has become increasingly necessary for both the parents to earn. Thus the child's early days are spent either in the care of hired help or nursery schools. This is inevitable in a society where the standard and the cost of living are ever on the increase. Even where there is no pressing economic need, women with a high education feel it their duty not to waste their education, and hence take to some outside job. On the one hand, this situation inevitably creates a gap between the generations, and on the other hand, removes any possibility of a closer understanding between the parent and the child. This, to me, seems to be the most important reason for the continuous diminishing of the authority of the family and the rebellion of the young against all traditions. This is because traditions have become identified in their minds with restraints, taboos, and controls, which they find are applied to them in a haphazard manner.

Such a rebellious attitude, which has its roots in the home life of the child, develops and later on becomes transferred to the school environment and what it stands for. Even here, the young mind finds that the curriculum is uninteresting, and the tasks set do not take into account the creative imagination of the child. The young is very sensitive to disapprobation, specially when it comes from their own group. Consequently, this provides the motive for conforming behaviour. Thus the student in the school or college feels that a necessary part of his behaviour is to be nonchalant to all authority and, whenever possible, oppose it. They feel an overwhelming need to assert their independence and individuality. So any pretext is enough to set fire to their rebellious tendencies.

The solution for this does not lie in trying to revert back to the old system of control, but to find ways and means of providing the necessary opportunities for the full development of the child. We have to accept the changed conditions in which the young have to live and the diminished role of the family in the shaping of the mind of the youth. One solution which the Western countries have found for this problem is to send children to boarding schools from a tender age. Thus the boarding school is made a substitute for the family in giving a child a proper foundation for a good life. It is obvious that, whether it is the boarding school or some other institute, some such external agency, which is well equipped to serve the need, is necessary to mould the minds of the young and guide them in the proper direction.

This brings us to our most important question: What type of an education can best produce the results which we seek to embody in the mind of the young of the nation? I am not here so much interested in the content of the educational curricula, as in the attitudes which these curricula develop in the minds of the students. We cannot deny the fact that the seeds sown in the tender mind blossom forth into various attitudes in later life, whether for good or bad. Therefore, a sense of moral values can be instilled when the different subjects that are studied are not taught as bare facts, but as a process of development tending towards the creation and maintenance of a worthwhile society.

We hear everywhere these days that our educational system must be remodelled and that moral and spiritual values must be included in their instruction. This, it is maintained, must be in addition to their normal studies in other disciplines. There are several methods in which this may be done. The most blatant way of doing this is to offer a course of religious instruction in the schools. But this cannot be acceptable to many people. Apart from the fact that many people are not believers in any one religion, there are various religions and sub-religions which may not all accept the same code of morals for their followers. Hence to introduce moral and spiritual values into education by the religious route will be ineffectual finally. To give this instruction under the heading 'moral instruction' smacks of a sort of priestly presumption, which always sets the students' back up. Therefore, if moral and spiritual values are to be taught in schools and colleges in a manner to suit the changing times, then the only way to do so with impunity is to make such values intrinsic and essential to the very processes of education itself. We often affirm vehemently the spiritual nature of our ancient heritage. But it is, indeed, a sad state of affairs when our young are deprived from learning about these values, because they are not taught in the schools and the colleges. They are usually considered a block to the progressive education of our day. When the ideals that are supposed to permeate our culture cannot be made the focal centre of our education, then there must be something radically wrong either with our educational system or our cultural values. Exclusion from our educational curricula of the faith that sustains and guides our social and cultural life makes it impossible to train the young to nourish and sustain our culture. This is at the root of the modern unrest and disintegration of our national life.

It is an axiomatic truth that, when an individual commits himself deeply to anything, then he will devote himself to that thing in such a manner as to exclude from it all undesirable influences. This is doubly true in the field of education. It is necessary to find ways and means to make students commit themselves to whatever they are learning in such a manner that such commitment transforms and changes their whole outlook on life. This can only be done when education is given not as a dull, drab, mechanical teaching, but when it is made into an exciting panoramic unfolding of the natural and social environment, so as to catch the imagination of the young mind. Book-learning is necessary, but it must rouse the fertile imagination of the young one and make him understand the mysteries of nature in its various aspects. Research should be the result of the student's burning desire to probe further and further into the meaning of his studies.

Human life develops a meaning and purpose when its direction is controlled by some overall agreement concerning what is worthwhile in life. When such direction and agreement is lacking, human life floats adrift in the seas of chance, sometimes landing in that which supplies a direction and some other times becoming a wreck. Very often it has been demonstrated in the history of human life that man attains the highest good when he is able to appreciate and understand in its proper perspective everything that his mind is capable of knowing. To know the true nature of things and understand and appreciate their relation to human beings is the highest knowledge a man can possess. It is towards this education that we should strive.

The greatest obstacle to this way of attaining knowledge is the attitudes that children develop as we have already outlined. The remedy to this does not lie in bemoaning that the family has slipped in its vocation, but to reorient our educational policies so as to provide the necessary guidance and direction to the child and make an effort to develop them into full human beings. We find a great deal of help to work this out in the Yoga system of philosophy. It recognizes that the root of the trouble lies in habit-formation. The more an action is done, the more it tends to repeat itself. The more an idea is concentrated on, the more it becomes a part of our accepted code of behaviour. In the first instance, when these happen to be wrong or harmful actions and thoughts, the child develops to be an unsocial and maladjusted adult. When a large number of people develop such harmful habits of thinking and doing, the society begins to disintegrate and rot. On the other hand, when such habits and thoughts are well directed towards a good social life, the society as a whole tends to move towards a better and richer fulfilment of itself through its members. Towards this end, the Yoga system has given us a scheme of principles. These are:

1. The individual must be made, by taking constant effort, to substitute good thoughts about others in the place of bad thoughts. This is one sure way of getting rid of unfriendly relations between man and man. Most of the evil in our present society is the outcome of deliberate cultivation of unfriendly relations by one section of the people against another. Although this cannot be eradicated in those who have already set habits, we can at least guard our young from this. They should be taught that man is both good and bad, and that no man is so bad as to deserve our complete condemnation.

2. It is not enough if we merely accept the fact that man is both good and bad. It is necessary to make an effort to cultivate friendly relations. This is necessary before we can understand the problems of the other person.

3. Sympathy and kindness are a necessary prerequisite to understand the process of any historical event. This would not make us pronounce harsh judgements.

4. The above three qualities are directed towards external situations. In addition to this, the Yoga system insists that a feeling of positive contentment and happiness must be developed within us. This should be reflected in our appreciation of greatness and goodness whenever we come across it. To concede the greatness of the other man and rejoice in his greatness instead of feeling jealous requires a great deal of mental discipline. As such, it will not make the child apathetic towards its own achievement, but on the other hand, will spur it on to greater effort.

5. Lastly, one should develop the great habit of suffering ill-will without rancour. This is what Mahatma Gandhi called *ahiṁsā*. When we meet with ill-will and hatred, it is nice to cultivate a habit of mind which will not get perturbed and react in an unseemly manner.

If only these five principles were to form the bed-rock of our educational system, in addition to creating in the mind of the young a commitment to what they study, then we would be developing a new type of generation in India who would be carrying on our cultural heritage to the future generations. These principles tend to create a greater social cohesion and integration without making all people uniform conformists. There is a great leeway for individual development, and yet providing at the same time, for a concerted developmental directive to social life. These attitudes can be acceptable to people of all persuasions as they are not sectarian. They are based on sound psychological possibilities of the human mind.

The great saint Swami Vivekananda must have had this in his mind, when he enlarged upon the type of education Indians should receive. He insisted that our education must be one that rouses the *śraddhā* of the person and lead him to self-knowledge. He gives us as a motto the verse from the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* which says: 'Arise, awake, and stop not till the Goal is reached' (I.3.4). We have had this with us from long past ages. Only we have not thought of implementing it in our educational system. When this is done, the path towards an integrated society will be laid down firmly.

A LETTER TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Dear Swami Vivekananda,

I trust you remember me as a fellow-traveller on your voyage from Japan to Chicago. I very much recall at this moment your views on the growth of the ascetic spirit in India and the duty, not of destroying, but of diverting it into useful channels.

I recall these ideas in connection with my scheme of Research Institute of Science for India, of which you have doubtless heard or read. It seems to me that no better use can be made of the ascetic spirit than the establishment of monasteries or residential halls for men dominated by this spirit, where they should live with ordinary decency, and devote their lives to the cultivation of sciences—natural and humanistic. I am of opinion that, if such a crusade in favour of an asceticism of this kind were undertaken by a competent leader, it would greatly help asceticism, science, and the good name of our common country; and I know not who would make a more fitting general of such a campaign than Vivekananda. Do you think you would care to apply yourself to the mission of galvanizing into life our ancient traditions in this respect? Perhaps, you had better begin with a fiery pamphlet rousing people in this matter. I should cheerfully defray all the expenses of publication.

With kind regards, I am, dear Swami,

23rd November 1898
Esplanade House, Bombay.

Yours faithfully,
Jamshedji N. Tata

WAYS OF MIND CONTROL

By Sri T. S. Avinashilingam

It is very difficult to control the mind. Having found the secret of controlling the mind and its concentration, a man becomes strong, balanced, and happy. In the absence of such control and concentration, a man loses all power, becomes incapable of great achievements or happy and peaceful living. It is for this reason that, from the beginning of time, man has tried various ways of controlling the mind. Extreme mortification of the body has been resorted to for this purpose. This has been of various kinds. This may take the form of violent denial to the body of anything that gives sensual pleasure and imposition upon the body of all kinds of pains and hardships. These practices include exposure of the body to cold and hot temperatures or climatic conditions; keeping it free from the comfort of cleanliness and subject to the hardships of dust and dirt, being besmeared and physically defiled by all kinds of pollution; wearing either nothing or dirty rags and ceaselessly causing to it various physical pains. This is based on the belief that the flesh and its drives are the greatest enemy of man and higher self. Therefore, all the needs of the organism, and especially its lusts, must be suppressed and denied.

Another kind of body-torture may be the denial to the body of its need of sleeping in comfortable conditions. Most of the followers of this method regularly practised sleeplessness for many days and nights, or reduced the period of sleep to an unbelievable minimum. In addition, they slept in conditions stripped of all comfort; on hard rocks, on the ground, without any bed or pillow, often without any blanket or cover. Some of them invented and practised sleeping on boards studded by sharp nails, or covered by sharp stones or thorns, others did not allow the body to stretch out fully or kept it in a painful posture. Next come the practices of denying to the sense-organs of the body or to its nervous system anything that may give sensory pleasure and seeking for the subjects, actions, thoughts, and forces that give to them pain. Beginning with viewing skulls, coffins, and other symbols of death and infirmity, and ending with avoidance of any pleasant sight, sound, fragrance, or other pleasure-giving stimuli, there are hundreds of techniques which have been practised for this purpose.

Examining the results of these various kinds of intense asceticism and extreme mortification of the body, it has been found that they do not serve the purpose for which these great pains were undertaken. Firstly, those who have adopted them have not always come out of these asceticisms with purified minds. Secondly, it has also been found that such ascetics had become inordinately proud and egoistic, instead of being filled with love, sympathy, and consideration for others, which is the real essence of spiritual life. Buddha first followed these severe asceticisms, but later found that such practices did not help spiritual pursuits. He came to the conclusion that this method of self-torturing does not kill selfish personal aim, nor does it efface the ego.

The reasons for the failure of these practices in achieving their objective is not far to seek. These go on the fundamental basis that it is the senses of the body that perceive. Pursuing this idea, they seem to have argued that the blunting and destroying of the senses will destroy their thoughts from the mind. Many ascetics in the East and the West, after many years of most cruel asceticism, have confessed, that in spite of such practices, impurity had not been taken off from their minds and sex urge had not been obliterated. The reason for this is not far to seek. The evil is not in the senses themselves. They are but instruments of the mind. It is our daily experience that the senses by themselves cannot perceive. I am reading a book in a railway station. The book is so interesting that all my mind is in it. Many trains come and go; thousands of people move about and make tremendous noise. But I am not affected. The ear is there transmitting all the noises, but it does not register on the mind, as it is not prepared to receive it. Taking another instance: We go to receive an old friend at the railway station. We see thousands of people. We do not notice them. We hurry along until we see the person whom we came to meet. Not that the eye did not register the other sights, only the mind was not interested in those other sights and so these impressions really did not exist for that person.

There are other and more wonderful examples. Swami Vivekananda and others used to go and meditate under the Panchavati in Dakshineshwar at the behest of the Master. Many could not meditate because of the terrible mosquitoes for which Calcutta and its suburbs are still notorious. Some could cover themselves with clothes and meditate for a little time. But Swamiji, as soon as he sat down, would lose himself in his meditation for hours together. Those who have seen him in those times say that he was covered by mosquitoes, millions of them sitting over his whole body and sucking out his blood. But these did not disturb him, because his mind was not with his body, but was elsewhere on a spiritual plane. It is said of Swami Turiyananda that, when he had to be operated upon for a carbuncle and the doctor suggested chloroform, he said that it was not necessary. He fixed his mind on God and immediately the body became senseless and the doctor performed his operation. It was not that the mosquitoes did not bite Swami Vivekananda or the operation did not hurt Swami Turiyananda, but their minds were not with the senses, which were thus powerless in carrying the impressions to the mind.

Therefore it is that Buddha found and many other prophets and saints found that mere torturing of the flesh will not purify the mind. In fact, in many cases, there had been found bad reaction. It is for this reason that the middle path has been advocated. As the *Gītā* has said: 'Success in Yoga is not for him who eats too much or too little or who sleeps too much or too little.' The Hindu scriptures have also advocated the mortification of the flesh, so that it may be brought within the control of the mind. But that control does not mean its torture or denial of its needs, but limitation and restraint of these needs in so far as they interfere with the realization of love to God and to one's fellow-men and with the spiritualization and ennobling of life. In fact, many of our scriptures have declared that the human body is the temple of God and through this body alone the Supreme has to be attained and for that reason the body must be kept healthy, pure, and clean.

It has also been made clear beyond doubt that absolute purity—*brahmacarya*—is the basic core of spiritual life. Purity, that is, chastity in thought, word, and deed, always and in all conditions, is what is called *brahmacarya*. But this purity cannot be attained by torture of the body. It can be attained only by cultivating a certain positive attitude of love and service. The qualities to be cultivated for this purpose are deep devotion towards higher ideals, irrevocable determination to give up lust, consecration of one's energy and activities towards a high purpose, regulation of the persons we meet, the society we work in, the books we read, the food we eat—all with the one idea that these should help in leading towards higher ideals and unselfish lives, consequently, avoiding all such things as loose society, passion-breeding novels, stories, newspapers, or cinemas, controlling the senses of sight, hearing, and other sense-organs, as Gandhiji said 'not hearing, seeing or speaking anything vile or obscene'. As Sri

Ramakrishna put it in his inimitable way, 'Where there is *kāma*, there cannot be Rāma', thereby indicating that absolute purity is the *sine qua non* of all spiritual life. This will also mean positive cultivation of all such good habits such as going to bed in time, early rising, eating only to satisfy hunger and not for taste, observing fastings, and above all, cultivation of the habit of daily prayers—morning, evening, and before going to bed.

It is interesting to see how the great saints of the East and the West have thought alike in this matter. St. Benedict in his *Instruments of Good Work* has prescribed vegetarian food for the monks and moderation in drinking, clothing, sleeping etc. The food should be twice a day with only two cooked dishes, as he considered that nothing is more contrary to the Christian spirit than gluttony. Moderate fasting was also recommended, especially during lent and similar occasions. So also, he has prescribed minimum clothes and bedding for the monks, which will not be too comfortable or too lacking. The idea was to restrain the bodily needs by satisfying the minimum, but denying their lusts without any torture or indulgence.

But Swami Vivekananda hit it on the nail when he said that all this restraint was certainly good for leading a spiritual life, but that in itself did not constitute spiritual life. A man may give up living in houses, he may give up wearing fine clothes, he may give up eating good food or he may go into the desert, but such a man may be the most attached person and his only possession, his own body, may become everything to him. Have we not heard the story that, in the *āśrama* where Janaka and others were studying, when the fire broke out, Janaka who had everything at stake, was yet detached, but others who had only their rags to loose ran helter-skelter? And so, it is not what you have that counts, but with what attitude you have it that matters.

It is good to relate here the story of Śuka mentioned by the Swami in his *Karma Yoga*. There was a great sage in India called Vyāsa. This Vyāsa is known as the author of the Vedānta aphorisms, and was a holy man. His father had tried to become a very perfect man and had failed. His grandfather had also tried and failed. His great-grandfather had similarly tried and failed. He himself did not succeed perfectly; but his son Śuka was born perfect. Vyāsa taught his son wisdom; and after himself teaching him the knowledge of truth, he sent him to the court of King Janaka. He was a great king and was called Janaka Videha. Videha means 'without a body'. Although a king, he had entirely forgotten that he was a body; he felt that he was a spirit all the time. This boy Śuka was sent to be taught by him. The king knew that Vyāsa's son was coming to him to learn wisdom; so he made certain arrangements beforehand. And when the boy presented himself at the gates of the palace, the guards took no notice of him whatsoever. They only gave him a seat, and he sat there for three days and nights, nobody speaking to him, nobody asking him who he was, or whence he was. He was the son of a very great sage, his father was honoured by the whole country, and he himself was a most respectable person; yet the low, vulger guards of the palace would take no notice of him. After that, suddenly, the ministers of the king and all the big officials came there and received him with the greatest honours. They conducted him in and showed him into splendid rooms, gave him the most fragrant baths and wonderful dresses, and for eight days they kept him there in all kinds of luxury. That solemnly serene face of Śuka did not change even to the smallest extent by the change in the treatment accorded to him; he was the same in the midst of this luxury as when waiting at the door. Then he was brought before the king. The king was on his throne, music was playing, and dancing and other amusements were going on. The king then gave him a cup of milk, full to the brim, and asked him to go seven times round the hall without spilling even a drop. The boy took the cup and proceeded in the midst of the music and the attraction of the beautiful faces. As desired by the king, seven times did he go round, and not a drop of the milk was spilt. The boy's mind could not be attracted by anything in the world, unless he allowed it to affect him. And when he brought the cup to the king, the king said to him: 'What your father has taught you, and what you have learned yourself, I can only repeat. You have known the Truth; go home.'

Thus the man that has practised control over himself cannot be acted upon by anything external; there is no more slavery for him. His mind has become free.

The attainment of this attitude of mind is no easy matter. Let it not be misunderstood that the advice to adopt the middle path means the adoption of middling effort. It requires a tremendous, consistent, continuous, and concentrated effort. One who is devoted to spiritual life and wants to attain the godly state must cultivate the qualities necessary for a divine life. As mentioned in the *Gītā*, they are: fearlessness, purity, steadfastness in knowledge and *yoga*, alms giving, control of the senses, *yajña*, reading of the Śāstras, austerity, uprightness, non-injury, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, tranquillity, absence of calumny, compassion to beings, non-covetousness, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness, boldness, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred, and absence of pride. For the cultivation of these qualities, unswerving faith is necessary, along with resignation to God. One should cultivate the company of sincere aspirants and avoid the company of men of little faith. Meditation and contemplation are essential aids for a godly life. Above all, whole-hearted perseverance is necessary. One can attain these ideals only through constant and determined endeavour throughout one's life.

THE WORK OF THE LORD

By Principal B. S. Mathur

Life is full of darkness and gloom. Man is not near fulfilment. He has desires he cannot realize; he has dreams he cannot materialize in actual life. This is so—there is all-embracing ignorance—just because we don't have eyes to penetrate. Why not turn to Kabir?

> The moon shines in my body, but my
> blind eyes cannot see it:
> The moon is within me, and so is the sun,
> The unstruck drum of Eternity is
> sounded within me; but my deaf
> ears cannot hear it.

A plain and naked truth is indicated. Only, one does not realize it. Hence the frustration and unending gloom followed by disappointment. Man cries for something that is far off, that he cannot easily grasp and make his own—a lasting possession he needs to give him joy and comfort, to make his life worth-living. Man has his idea that he wants to concretize, but he is not able to do so in the absence of real light and illumination. There is the moon in the body, but he does not see it, does not realize its light and brilliance that can light his way through complications of life. His eyes are not eyes: they are an obstacle; they are not properly trained to see things in their true colours. This training of the eyes is possible of attainment through real and sacred education. That education, that culture, that evolution of sacredness, that manifestation of Divinity in man's acts, thoughts, and dreams, is not forthcoming. And the result is darkness. Man cannot discriminate between right and wrong. He cannot, therefore, go forward in his mission of illumination and enlightenment in the world. He wants freedom, an atmosphere in which it might be given to him to rise to every inch of his personality, as designed by the Creator; but he does not go forward or upward. God wants man to go hand in hand with Him in the sacred mission of doing holy things. But man cannot go with Him. Man is unable to act, as he should, making himself always an instrument in the spread of light and sweetness. He has eyes but cannot see. This is the tragedy. He seems to lose his Paradise through his own faults. Indeed, it is all a matter of pity and of ever-deepening sorrow.

When it is given to man to rise and to be comfortable in the world man must be himself, he must realize his significance to the utmost, so that the world he lives in becomes a world of happiness and comfort to all. This is the burden of Kabir's song.

There is eternity with its music inside man, but he does not hear it. Man is keen about immortality. He wants to live for all time and wants to leave behind things that may ever keep his memory green. But eternity he is unable to touch. His ear is shut to the divine and sweet music that can transform his life into a song for all time, a song that is always to please and elevate, that is to raise him above the noise of the world into some divine music or melody to resolve his entire sufferings and complications. Music leads to harmony. There are complications in life. These complications must be resolved, if man is to carry out what his God has designed him for. Man has to create a world of music to inspire him for great deeds. God has created the world. Man has to beautify it, make it melodious without any disturbance. He has to hear the unstruck drum of eternity that sounds in him. The sound is there as the drum of eternity resides in him. Only he does not hear it. Man's ears are to be trained; they are to be trained by associations. Man must live in an atmosphere of harmony, delicate harmony that can uplift him to divinity, to ever-spreading sweetness in the world.

The drum of eternity appears to be unsounded, because of man's ignorance and lack of training. Man has just to realize that drum of eternity, something that can enable him to live for all time, something that can make him one with God. Man has to rise: he has to go beyond. He concentrates on himself. That is a great mistake. He is selfish, that is a great drawback that keeps him away from his goal of eternity. Let him look through his imperfections. Kabir finely puts it:

> So long as man clamours for the *I* and the
> *mine*, his works are as naught;
> When all love of the *I* and the *mine* is dead
> then the work of the Lord is done.

Here is a deep philosophy of life, indeed, a philosophy of life because it is so real and so elevating and so man-making that one cannot forget it, if one possesses real knowledge and real freedom of mind, before which all manner of ignorance vapours away and blends into something that is divine and human alike in utmost measure.

Kabir is prescribing a universal outlook on life, an outlook that can eradicate what is chaotic in life and what leads to never-ending conflicts. Man must see inside; he must look to God who resides in him. This feeling of God, realization of God's significance, when all differences can melt away, is the thing that ought to prevail in life. *I* and *mine* must disappear. What a man does, he does it not for himself alone. Of course, he cannot neglect himself; his personality is there and he cannot ignore it. But still the great idea is of the universal man, indeed, of the universal that is in man. God has created man without prejudice. So man, if he is really a man, should be in God's image, ever-enveloped by sacredness and ever keen on harmony and rhythm in life. Hence the clamour of 'I' and 'mine' should be replaced by a greater clamour for seeing God in all humanity. God's work has to be done. There must obtain in the world a ceaseless atmosphere of light and sweetness so that each individual is allowed complete freedom and, to the utmost measure and in all intensity, the freedom to reveal himself in his deeds and dreams. That is the work of the Lord on earth.

Kabir is insisting on a life of holiness. He wants man to be fully developed with all-embracing flowering of divinity in his life. He wants man to treat man as man, a being to be loved and nursed up into a happy consummation. He forcefully calls for a revolution in our thinking, so that man can transcend himself to cover humanity and humanity's progress. He insists on work that gives man the real knowledge, knowledge of his self, in fact, as such, the knowledge of God Himself, in which knowledge there is no room for human imperfections. He wants God to live on earth. How beautifully Kabir says:

> The muck is in the deer, but it seeks it
> not within itself: it wanders in quest
> of grass.

Why concentrate on grass? Here is a philosophy of realism. He is not calculating for any escape from the world. He has tremendous imagination, so graceful and so sublime, and he wants this imagination to help us in coming face to face with life. Kabir does not revel in theorizing. He is positively a practical thinker who has come to his outlook of life through experience and experiment with the reality of life.

Kabir's language is severely plain. He does not accommodate any amount of decoration of language in his poetry. He feels and expresses his feelings, his sacred emotions, his idea of reality of life, in very much simplified images. Man is in quest of 'grass' in the world. Mere show, something that cannot help us far, something that cannot melt into something great and graceful, man aims at in life. He follows the shadow, not the substance. That is the mistake. The musk is inside man. Why not think of realizing it in life on earth? The eyes that are shut must open to the great reality that lies concealed inside and needs only an atmosphere to open out in all perfection. Kabir's aim is to create the right type of atmosphere in the world. The burden is on that education which brings about a release from darkness and frustration that is obtaining today in the world. Kabir may aptly be considered a real educationist. He has fancy, but not the fancy to roam away from reality; he has fancy in abundance just to face life with beauty and sublimity. One can think of Kabir as insisting on the present and on the place where one is situated. He is not dreaming. He wants man to be himself; there is supreme joy, also supreme wisdom, in being oneself. God has not created man for nothing. He has put in something which is of immeasurable significance in him and, of that, there must be real emergence in the world. And that is the work of the Lord. And that is according to Kabir 'taking your seat on the thousand petals of the lotus, and rest there gazing on the Infinite Beauty'.

The idea is clear. This Beauty which one needs concentrate upon is not anything outside of us. It resides in man. Only it has to be seen; only eyes have to be opened so that one may be face to face with Infinite Beauty. A mental apparatus is to be evolved through education, culture, and atmosphere to evolve an outlook that sees beauty combined with sacredness in man so as to usher in an air of peace and harmony in the world.

At the moment, the world is dark with clouds of chaos and frustration. These clouds must be lifted away; they must melt into peace and sublimity. Let us open our eyes to see the moon shining in our bodies.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Professor Rabindra Kumar Siddhanta Sastri, M.A., P.R.S., is the Head of the Department of Sanskrit in M.B.B. College, Agartala, Tripura. In his beautiful Sanskrit composition, 'Vivekānanda-Praśastiḥ', he pays his tribute of respect to Swami Vivekananda on the occasion of the Swami's Birth Centenary Celebration. . . .

H. H. Sri Jaya Chamaraja Wadiyar, the Governor of Mysore, is a profound scholar of Indian philosophy. The article on Swami Vivekananda, published in this issue, is the report of a speech he delivered at Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bombay, in connection with the Birth Centenary Celebrations of Swamiji. It may be of interest to know that the grandfather of the Maharaja was a host of Swami Vivekananda during his *parivrājaka* days and held the Swami in great esteem and deep veneration. . . .

Swami Bhaswarananda is the Head of the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Varanasi. In his article, he gives an account of the visits of Swami Vivekananda to Varanasi, the holy city of Lord Śiva, where, incidentally, the first charitable hospital of the Mission was started under the inspiration of the great Swami himself.

The present article is the summary of a lecture delivered by Dr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar some years back in New Delhi. His personal reminiscences and his analysis of Swamiji's message make this article both interesting and valuable. . . .

Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D., formerly Head of the Department of Ancient History, University of Lucknow, is a scholar of international repute. In this short article, which is from the report of one of his lectures, he pays his tribute to the sacred memory of Swami Vivekananda. . . .

Dr. (Mrs.) Sarasvati Chennakesavan, M.A., Ph.D., of Pachiappa's College, Madras, discusses in her illuminating article some of the problems of present day education and also offers some helpful suggestions for their solution. She, incidentally, points out what Swami Vivekananda said about the object of education. . . .

Sri T. S. Avinashilingam, M.P., is the Head of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Perianaickenpalayam, Coimbatore District, Madras State. His article, 'Ways of Mind Control', is a chapter from one of his forthcoming books, in which he has dealt with some of the most important problems that confront a student of our days. In this article, he stresses the need of mind control and suggests some very useful methods to gain it. . . .

Principal B. S. Mathur, M.A., of M.M.H. College, Ghaziabad, is one of our regular contributors. In his article, 'The Work of God', he says that God has allowed man an immense scope for development and every freedom to know his real Self. But man, in his own ignorance, fails to attain the real joy of life. Quoting the saint-poet Kabir, the writer says that we have everything within ourselves and need not go outside to seek for light. We have only to open our eyes, awake in our consciousness, and realize the Supreme.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SON OF MAN. By Leslie Paul. *Published by Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., London EC.4. 1961. Pages 287. Price 21 shillings.*

The story of Jesus has not been so far viewed in a proper perspective. The historical and socio-economic factors constituting the *milieu* have to be known thoroughly to grasp the significance of the life and work of Jesus. Mr. Paul, in the present work, narrates vividly and graphically the life in Asia Minor during the first century. Social, political, and religious forces of the period provide a proper arena for Jesus to work there. The book is lucidly written and well documented. Students of history and theology will, no doubt, find a poetic activity at work here. But it adds to the charm of the narrative.

Dr. P. S. Sastri

LONELY GOD, LONELY MAN. By Dean Turner. *Published by Philosophical Library, Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York-16. Pages 191. Price $ 3.75.*

'The aim of this book', says the author (in p. 5), 'is to expound the moral purpose of loneliness, to make clear what *loneliness* is, and why it is' (italics are mine). Reading through the pages of this slender volume, one feels that the author has had a deep Christian experience, and also some deep distressing experience. The passionate conviction with which he presents the *care* of God for man, and the *care* which man ought to have for all brother men, and through them for God, is really stirring. Let us leave aside his misinterpretation of psycho-analysis, psycho-pathology, and the modern social disciplines. They do not count in a work characterized by lofty spiritual aspirations. But there are certain misreadings of Christian doctrines and Christian convictions (Chapter III) which count. The author is not able to reconcile the perfection of God with his care for man and his sufferings. Logic, and particularly two-valued logic, is the bane of man. Faith must transcend reason, if we are to come close to God. God can make the impossible possible. Witness the two roses, pink and white, on the same stalk, which Sri Ramakrishna Deva spotted out!

Moreover, loneliness is negative. The positive aspect, compassion, longing for companionship, longing for love and affection—these should be stressed. *Loneliness* as a refrain that runs through every chapter of the book is positively boring. However, the author makes full amends in the last chapter where he gives us a most impressive rendering of basic articles of Christian faith.

Professor P. S. Naidu

THOUGHTS FROM THE GITA. By R. Krishnaswamy Aiyar. *Published by Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd. Madras-17. 1961. Pages 181. Price Rs. 4.*

Numerous have been the books published so far on the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. But this source of never-waning inspiration draws more and more people to study it and write on it. For the meaning underlying these 700 simple verses is such a profound ocean that an ardent diver can find yet another pearl every time he dives.

The book under review is its second impression which fact proves its popularity. The object of the book is to explain the fundamental tenets of the *Gītā* on the background of Advaita Vedānta. An unwary reader of the *Gītā* cannot grasp the non-dualistic doctrine it preaches in all its details. And, if he cannot read it in the original, it is all the more difficult. The present volume can come to the help of such a reader of the *Gītā*, by presenting non-dualistic Vedānta in a lucid style in eighteen well-arranged chapters, quoting at every step the relevant *ślokas* from the *Gītā*, in its English translation. Thus the book, at once, acts as a treatise of Advaita philosophy and a guide to the *Gītā*.

We wish the book a wide readership.

S. S.

SRI KANCHI KAMAKOTI PITHAM THROUGH THE AGES. By N. Ramesan. *Published by Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras-17. 1962. Pages 31. Price Re. 1.*

It is well known that Śrī Śaṅkarācārya established the four *maṭhas* of Sringeri, Puri, Dvaraka, and Badrinath, in the four corners of India. But few are aware that he also established a *maṭha* named Kāñci Kāmakoti Pīṭha at Kanchipuram, one of the most important centres of pilgrimage in India. The booklet under review testifies to the antiquity of this Pīṭha, by describing the inscriptions on the various copper plates preserved in the Pīṭha. These copper plates refer to various grants and endowments made to the Pīṭha by various kings from time to time.

Ānandagiri, the earliest biographer of Śaṅkarācārya, refers in his *Śaṅkara-vijaya* to the Kāñci Kāmakoti Pīṭha, as having been founded by Śaṅkara. Besides, it is common knowledge that Śaṅkara was a great worshipper of Śakti, as his *Saundaryalaharī* testifies. And then, there are evidences to prove that he was devoted to the deity of Kāmākṣī at Kāñci. To add to these, the copper plates discussed in this booklet offer evidence to prove the antiquity of this Pīṭha. It is interesting to read that one of the grants was made by Tana Shah, the last of the Qutub Sahi line of Muslim kings. This proves that even some of them held this *maṭha* in reverence.

The booklet is too short to go fully into the history of the Pīṭha. Even the discussion on the copper plates is brief. Besides, a narration of the present activities of the *Pīṭha* would have made the book more useful and stimulated more interest. (Of course, homage is paid to the present *ācārya* in pages 25 to 27 of the booklet.) We hope further publications on the subject will rectify these deficiencies.

S. S.

We are glad to inform our readers that the following translations of the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* are being published in the different Indian languages during the birth centenary year of Swami Vivekananda:

BENGALI: VIVEKĀNANDER VĀNĪ O RACANĀ, IN 10 VOLUMES. *Price Rs. 40. Udbodhan Office, 1 Udbodhan Lane, Calcutta 3.*

GUJARATI: SWĀMĪ VIVEKĀNANDA ŚATĀBDI GRANTHAMĀLĀ (FIRST SERIES), IN 12 VOLUMES (10 volumes of which are the translation of the *Complete Works*, and 2 volumes the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda). *Price Rs. 5 each volume (only complete sets are sold. A concession of Rs. 9 is allowed, during the Centenary year, on purchase of the complete set, i.e. the set is available at Rs. 51). Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Rajkot.*

HINDI: VIVEKĀNANDA SĀHITYA, IN 10 VOLUMES. *Price Rs. 47.50. Advaita Ashrama, 5 Dehi Entally Road, Calcutta 14.*

KANNADA: VIVEKĀNANDA KṚTI ŚRENI, IN 10 VOLUMES. *Price Rs. 65. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mysore 2.*

MALAYALAM: VIVEKĀNANDA SĀHITYA SARVASVAM, IN 7 VOLUMES. *Price Rs. 6 each volume. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Trichur, Kerala State.*

MARATHI: VIVEKĀNANDA GRANTHĀVALĪ, IN 10 VOLUMES. *Price Rs. 70. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Nagpur 1.*

ORIYA: VIVEKĀNANDAN KA BĀNĪ O RACANĀ, IN 10 VOLUMES. *Price Rs. 35. Sri Ramakrishna Math, Bhubaneshwar.*

TAMIL: VIVEKĀNANDA JNĀNA DĪPAM, IN 10 VOLUMES. *Price Rs. 50. Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 4.*

TELUGU: VIVEKĀNANDA SAMPŪRNA GRANTHĀVALĪ, IN 10 VOLUMES. *Price Rs. 50. Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 4.*

[A popular edition of the *Complete Works* in English is also being published in eight volumes. *Price Rs. 32. Advaita Ashrama, 5 Dehi Entally Road, Calcutta 14.*]

We have received the following books, souvenirs, and special issues of magazines published in connection with the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda:

ENGLISH

WHAT RELIGION IS: IN THE WORDS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. EDITED BY JOHN YALE. INTRODUCTION BY CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD. *Phoenix Ltd., 10-13 Bedford Street, Strand, London WC 2. 1962. Pages 224. Price 30 shillings.*

THE INDIAN POLICE JOURNAL. 25 Akbar Road, New Delhi.

BULLETIN OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE. Gol Park, Calcutta 29. *Price Rs. 2.*

HINDI

UPANIṢAD SANKALAN (2 PARTS). *Price Re. 1 each. Ramakrishna Mission Calcutta Students' Home, Belgharia, 24-Parganas, West Bengal.*

YUGĀCĀRYA VIVEKĀNANDA. BY SWAMI APURVANANDA. *For Free Distribution. Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Varanasi 1, U.P.*

VIVEKĀNANDA ŚATĀBDI SMĀRAK PUSTIKĀ. *Sarvangi Vikash Sangha, Ahmedabad 1, Gujarat.*

PĀNCAJANYA. *Price 40 nP. Rashtra Dharma Prakashan Ltd. Lucknow.*

BENGALI

VĪR SANNYĀSĪ VIVEKĀNANDA. BY MOHITLAL MAJUMDAR. *Price Rs. 5. General Printers and Publishers (Private) Ltd., Calcutta 13.*

VIVEKĀNANDER ŚIKṢĀ CINTĀ. BY TAMAS RANJAN ROY. *Price Rs. 5. General Printers and Publishers (Private) Ltd., Calcutta 13.*

YUGAPRAVARTAK VIVEKĀNANDA. BY SWAMI APURVANANDA. *Price Rs. 3. Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bankura, West Bengal.*

ĀMĀDER VIVEKĀNANDA. BY SWAMI SATYAGHANANANDA. *Price 6 nP. Ramakrishna Mission Calcutta Students' Home, Belgharia, 24-Parganas.*

UPANIṢAD SANKALAN (2 PARTS.) *Price Re. 1 each. Ramakrishna Mission Calcutta Students' Home, Belgharia, 24-Parganas.*

VIVEKĀNANDA ŚATA DĪPĀYAN (A COLLECTION OF ARTICLES). *Price Rs. 6. Vivekananda Sangha, Budge Budge, 24-Parganas.*

ĀŚRAM. *Ramakrishna Mission Boys' Home, Rahara, 24-Parganas.*

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA CENTER

NEW YORK

A dinner was held by the Center, at the Warwick Hotel on March 28, 1963, to celebrate the Swami Vivekananda birth centenary. His Excellency U Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations, was the chief speaker of the evening (the text of his speech is published in the May '63 issue, pp. 285-88). A large gathering of representative Americans and Indians had assembled to pay homage to Swamiji. Mr. Vincent Sheean, the noted author, traced the gradual process of Swami Vivekananda's transformation at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna, his work in America, and how he combined in his life and work mystical experience and social consciousness. Swami Nikhilananda, in his concluding remarks, mentioned Swami Vivekananda's vision of a Parliament of Man, which in a measure we find fulfilled today in the United Nations. Swami Vivekananda, the Swami said, taught the potential divinity of every soul, the fundamental solidarity of men, and the harmony of religions. He preached about a God who is above all gods, a religion which rises above all religiosities, and transcends all dogmas, rituals, and doctrines. The whole world, he pointed out, could be united on the basis of such a universal religion, which would recognize the divinity of prophets like Christ, Buddha, and Kṛṣṇa, and would have no room for intolerance and persecution but unbounded respect for all faiths. Such a religion would devote itself to bringing out the potential divine nature of every man and woman by allowing them to follow the laws of their own inner growth. True religion, Swami Vivekananda emphasized, helps man to acquire strength, beauty, dignity, and a warm fellowship with others. To combat aggressive evil, the world, indeed, needs such a religion of aggressive goodness.

LENINGRAD UNIVERSITY, U.S.S.R.

The Vivekananda birth centenary was observed at Leningrad University, according to a Tass report (published in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta, in its issue of Saturday, the 18th May 1963).

Speaking at a meeting in the University, devoted to the centenary, on Wednesday, the 15th May 1963, Eva Lusternik, a prominent Leningrad orientalist, stressed that the Soviet people marked the 'Vivekananda year' in recognition of the democratic aspirations of this wonderful person, a fighter for the independence of his country, and in respect for the culture of friendly India.

We cherish, she said, the memory of Swami Vivekananda, one of the first Indian philosophers who noticed the sufferings and hardships of the common people.

The meeting was sponsored by the local branch of the Soviet-Indian Cultural Relations Society and the Leningrad City Seminar on Indology, and was attended by Indian specialists and post-graduate students.

Students and teachers of the Faculty of Indian Philology read works in Sanskrit in honour of the famous philosopher-saint.

CORRIGENDUM

May 1963 issue, page 183, column 2, lines 27 and 28:

Please read

'tion, whose outlook is secular and ultimate-
ly materialistic, and where man finds himself'

in place of

'tion is secular, and its outlook ultimate-
ly materialistic, where man finds himself'

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVIII JULY 1963 No. 7

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Allahabad Math, March 22, 1932

It was 'Holi' that day. Devotees started coming from early morning with offerings and *abir* (coloured powder) in their hands with which they first worshipped the Master and then came to Swami Vijnananandaji for his blessings. A monk, too, sought his blessings. He blessed them all from his heart, and after a few minutes' silence, said: 'People very often are saved if they live in the proximity of spiritually developed souls. Once, on Dussera day, we were staying with Swamiji in Nilambar Mukherji's garden house at Belur. It was the monastery then. Swamiji was in those days on a very high spiritual plane. That day when I touched his feet in obeisance, I received a strong shock like that of electricity. Anyone going near such persons would feel as if a spiritual zone had been created round about them. Whosoever entered that zone could feel as if an electric force was entering into him from outside and he would have a spiritual experience.

'Latu Maharaj (Swami Adbhutananda) on his first visit to the Master had come with Ram Datta as his servant. But just as the Master saw him, he asked Ram Babu who that boy was, and the latter introduced him as his servant. Then, one day, the Master asked Latu Maharaj: "Will you stay with me?" The latter immediately agreed. Look at the effect of spiritual power. Latu Maharaj felt himself electrically charged; there was no escape for servant Latu.'

A devotee: 'Are the *guru* and the chosen Deity one and the same? The scriptures identify the *guru* with the divine trinity (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Maheśvara).'

Maharaj: 'Yes, they are the same. But so long as you are in the region of name and form, you have got to accept them as separate entities. When true vision comes, you discover they are one and the same. But a true realization of this entails a good deal of spiritual effort. The *guru* then merges in the Deity.

'On being asked about caste distinctions, the Master once said: "When you place some dry logs of wood over the weak flame of a match stick, will they burn at all? And when you throw a whole plantain-tree into a blazing forest of dry wood, will it put out the fire or will the fire burn the plantain-tree and all?" When you begin with only traces of religious experience within you, you have got to observe the distinction between the *guru* and the Deity, the distinctions of castes, customs, and conventions, etc. Otherwise, the little divine inspiration which you have gets confused and lost. But when divine fire rages within, all these differences vanish. The fire of Brahman-realization constantly burnt in the Master. He used to see the Universal Mother in every created being. That is why he said: "There was a time when I would even take the leavings of a dog's food in the garden (at Dakshineshwar). The same eternal presence was everywhere; it was as if a storm was blowing all over."'

Allahabad Math, April, 1932

A number of devotees came to Swami Vijnananandaji in the evening. There was also a professor from Sarnath who, during the Swami's visit to Sarnath, had shown him round there. In the course of talk, there was reference to the excavations at Sarnath. The Swami said: 'After the first excavations, when the images were kept in different places, they appeared to be living deities, full of a serene gravity and softness. But when they were removed inside the museum, the figures appeared to lose their solemnity. But the figures or pictures of great souls, wherever and however they may be placed, are always alive and inspiring.

'Sometime about 1918, while in Varanasi, one morning at about seven o'clock, I went to Sarnath walking. I had made no definite plans; only after coming out for the walk, did I think of going to Sarnath. Reaching there I was going round, when a guide told me that there was a stone containing carvings of the entire life story of the Buddha. I went to see it, and while gazing at it in speechless wonder, I had a strange supernatural vision, the like of which I had never before, although I had some visions previously in temples and pilgrim centres. It was something inexpressible, a formless ocean of light. By and by, the entire universe disappeared from before my eyes, and I found myself standing like a tiny speck on the edge of that bright ocean, gazing speechlessly at that blissful effulgence. I had lost all self-consciousness. Gradually there came into view a lovely image of the Buddha in all his benign sweetness, giving me a feeling of intense joy. Even now, as I speak about it, I get that delightful sensation. I had remained thus for a long time when I heard a voice coming from afar telling me to move on. It was the guide speaking. He thought I had fallen asleep. On hearing his voice I came back to myself. When, in the evening, I returned to the Sevashrama, they all enquired where I had been and said that my meal had been kept for me. I didn't tell them where I had been, but only said that I did not feel hungry and would not take any food. I went quietly to bed, still full of the divine joy that I had experienced. The effect of it lasted for three days.

'Tradition has it that Lord Buddha came to Prayag (Allahabad) also. He walked along the road where the clock tower now stands, and even grazing cattle gazed at his benign countenance in speechless amazement. All this because he had perfect peace within. Mark, what tremendous power he had! Even animals were attracted and charmed! What to say of men?

'Buddhadeva was a unique personality. He was the son of a king, and therefore, had a very large heart. His mercy, too, was infinite. Anybody who had been guilty of wrong-doing would, on asking his forgiveness, be immediately pardoned. A man was once abusing him in foul language for no reason whatsoever. The Buddha listened in patience without making any kind of protest. Afterwards, he asked that person: "Well, if anybody goes to a person with a quantity of presents and they are not accepted, what happens to those presents?" The man replied: "They are, of course, taken back by the person who brought them." Then Buddhadeva said: "I have accepted nothing of what you were offering all this time. You please carry them all back." The man was very much embarrassed and asked his pardon.

'Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) used to say that very few persons like the Buddha have been born in the world. Such souls do not want to be born.'

With regard to God's creative sports, Maharaj said: 'This universe—the entire creation and all living beings—have been there from the beginning of time. Nothing new is happening; the same process has been going on in different ages, just like a lump of clay being made into a particular image and then broken and made into another image. This is how the creative process has been going on; nothing new, only a repetition.'

Talk on the Master led to the topic of Dakshineshwar temple. Maharaj said: 'Yes, nowadays various shops have sprung up round about the temple and all sorts of people come there. The old serenity is no longer there. That has been the state of affairs in more or less all the centres of pilgrimage and famous temples. You will find that, while on the one hand, there are monks and holy men, there are, on the other hand, people of an entirely different category. Everyone, certainly, is not religiously inclined. Many people come to do business there. The South Indian temples are also in the same condition. You have to cross many shops and stalls before you can find the house of God.'

A devotee: 'What is the significance of the disgusting erotic carvings that you find on the walls of the Jagannath temple? A sight of these gives rise only to evil thoughts.'

Maharaj: 'What you see on the walls is only an expression of worldly affairs. That is the sort of thing in which the world is engrossed. You have got to transcend all these and enter the temple; and only if you can see and touch Him with a pure and sincere heart, can you hope for God's everlasting peace. Outside the temple, it is worldliness; inside it is God.'

In connection with his visit to the temple of Jagannath, Maharaj said: 'After entering the temple, I embraced the Lord Jagannath; He seemed to be soft like a doll of butter.'

Allahabad Math, July 14, 1932

It was about 8.30 p.m., and all the visitors had left with the exception of one who humbly said to Swami Vijnananandaji: 'I desire, Maharaj, to hear something about the Master. Will you tell me how you were attracted to him?'

Maharaj: 'I was then living at Belgharia, studying in class nine or ten. One day, at about four o'clock in the afternoon, I was playing in Sarada's house with only a dhoti on, when one of our playmates came and said: "Will you go to see the Paramahamsa?" We said: "Where is he?" He replied: "Just there, in Govind Dewan's house." I didn't know what a Paramahamsa was. To tell the truth, I was rather awed by the ochre-coloured cloth. But we went. On going there, we found the Master clad in a white dhoti. Everybody was like that, there was no one in saffron clothes. The Master was standing and it was a wonderful sight. His facial expression was somewhat unique, as if bursting with joy. It was not by any means distorted. All his physical energy seemed to have gone upwards and he seemed to be overwhelmed with a feeling of intense delight. His teeth could be seen in a smile and his eyes seemed to be riveted on something and were spellbound. He had lost all outward consciousness. Someone was standing by and holding him to keep him from falling. Another was singing a hymn. Near me sat Rajen Sarkar, one of our playmates. I told him: "Look, the man seems to be overwhelmed with delight. His gaze is not fixed on anything outside, but on someone whose vision has filled him with intense joy." When we went there, the hymn, Jaya Dayāmaya, was being sung. When the hymn was over, the Master himself sang an invocation to the Goddess—a song by Rāmprasād. When he was singing, it seemed as if he was seeing Her just in front of him and was enraptured. Rajen just said: "Yes, yes, that's so." I have no idea as to what Rajen felt about it.

'I saw there another person in a trance whose name, I learnt later, was Nityagopal. His face, eyes, and chest had turned crimson. He was close to the Master. After a while, the Master sat down and started speaking to Nityagopal in an ecstatic mood. To me, their talk was incomprehensible; only some indistinct sounds were being heard. In such ecstatic moods, people can't talk properly. When the Master was standing, his mood was that of Mother Kālī; but when he sat down, it was that of Lord Kṛṣṇa. It might be that, because Nityagopal had the bent of his mind towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Master was talking to him in that way. Another thing that I saw then in the Master has remained imprinted on my memory for all times. From the base of the spine right up to his head, the whole column had become inflated like a thick rope. And the energy that rose upward towards the brain seemed to be spreading its hood and swaying its head like a snake dancing in joy.

'It became evening now. After *bhajanas,* Govinda Babu took the Master and his companions upstairs and we returned home. My mother enquired about the cause of my being late; I only gave an evasive reply. That was my first meeting with the Master. I think I saw the Master in Belgharia on another occasion also.

'Two or three years went by. I was a second year student in St. Xavier's College with Sarat Maharaj (Swami Saradananda) as one of my classmates. Another classmate was Barada Pal—a nice boy. Once there was a talk among us of going to see the Paramahamsa. Soon after, one day we three went to Dakshineshwar by boat and arrived at Paramahamsa Deva's room. We found the Master preparing to go to Calcutta. The carriage was at the door and the Master's destination was Mani Mullik's house at Sinduriapatty. He was asking Ramlal and others to make haste and told us to go to that house. He said that if we only mentioned his name, there would be no difficulty about our admittance there. We bowed to him and returned to Calcutta. I remember it was very late when I came back home from Mani Mullik's house that night and got a scolding from my mother. When she heard that I had been to see the Master, she said: "You went to that mad Brāhmaṇa who has made 350 boys crazy?" Yes, crazy, indeed! And the craziness continues even now. And what a severe scolding it was! Like this I went to see him at Dakshineshwar on five or six occasions, and twice or thrice I even spent the night there. One night when I was there, Girish Babu came with his friends. Mahapurush Maharaj also I met somewhere about that time. He also recalls it. Even now he remembers the Master's words of encouragement to him: "Yes, you will succeed."'

Devotee: 'We have heard that the Master used to put all his disciples through a test. How did he test you?'

Maharaj: 'Well, nothing much. ... He did it that way!' And after some pause, the Swami continued: 'The Master used to test everyone in a state of nudity, and in my case also, it was the same. It didn't matter at all; I was a mere boy at that time. He told me to massage his feet which I did with some vigour, and he told me to do it gently. I remember his telling me: "I see within you a small flame like a burning match stick." I didn't, of course, understand then what it all meant. Now, after studying the fifth dimension, I can understand the meaning of his words. He could see into hearts of men like things inside a show-case.

'The last night that I spent at Dakshineshwar was the one on which the Master's throat trouble started. In the morning, he told Ramlal that his throat was aching. A boy who was there advised the use of a certain medicinal plant named "Tejbal" and that "Tejbal paste" would cure the pain. The Master asked Ramlal to get it. Ramlal was well aware of the Master's nature and he promised to obtain it. That was the last I saw of him.

'Then I came to Patna. The rented house where I lived on Govinda Mitra Road is now the Mission Ashram. (The Ashram has since been shifted to its own ground.) There I saw in the paper the news about the Master's passing away. I had a vision of the Master the previous night. I saw him standing before me. I thought: "Why should the Master be here? Why did I see him standing like this?" The next day the papers brought me the news of his demise.

'I had a similar strange vision when Swamiji Maharaj (Swami Vivekananda) passed away. I was meditating in the Brahmavadin Club at Allahabad when I saw Swamiji on the lap of the Master. I was puzzled. Subsequently, I got a wire from Belur Math that he had passed away.'

After keeping silent for some time, he again said: 'A question that arises in my mind is, where shall we be after giving up this mortal frame? I asked Mahapurush Maharaj who told me that we would be in the Ramakrishna world where we would be keeping company with the Master. But I have decided not to go anywhere. To contemplate on the Master all the time and not to forget him even for an instant is to be in his company. That is the Ramakrishna world—to think of him all the time with heart and soul, never losing him even for a moment. To the extent that a person is sincere and pure, the Master will reveal himself to him. My only prayer is that till my last breath, I may retain my purity and sincerity unsullied. I say, he only is free who has gained mastery over his passions; and one who is a slave to them is bound in chains.'

SWAMI BRAHMANANDA: OUR HOMAGE

[EDITORIAL]

Along with Swami Vivekananda, in the year eighteen hundred and sixty-three, was ushered into the stage of the world another significant character who was to play an important role in the divine drama that was being enacted on the banks of the holy Gaṅgā at Dakshineshwar, with Sri Ramakrishna as its central figure. This character was that of Swami Brahmananda, known in his pre-monastic days as Rakhal Chandra Ghosh. He was born on January 21, at Sikra Kulingram in the 24 Parganas, a few days after Swami Vivekananda was born in Calcutta. Rakhal's father, Ananda Mohan, a rich zamindar of the place, was a kind patriarch, and mother Kailash Kamini was a very pious and devout lady; and the boy had, from his very childhood, an atmosphere which helped him become what he was to be in his later life. A healthy, intelligent, and loving boy, he had varied interests of life. Physical culture, love for music, interest in the well-being of his fellow playmates, desire to know the why and how of many things, and above all, his religious tendencies and devotion towards gods and goddesses marked him out as one distinct from the common boys of the village. He would often retire, either alone or in the company of a few selected friends, to some solitary place and would sing devotional songs, very often losing his outer consciousness in the process and remain absorbed in himself for long periods of time.

After finishing his primary education in the village school, which his father had started particularly for him, Rakhal was sent to Calcutta, where he came in contact with Narendra Nath, known later as Swami Vivekananda. Narendra Nath was a dynamic spirit and a born leader. Rakhal, who was meek, gentle, and very soft-hearted by nature, came under the spell of Narendra Nath, and a deep friendship grew between the two which was to transform itself into the unbreakable bond of spiritual brotherhood and bear fruit in so many ways, of which we all are aware today.

It was by a strange coincidence of family connections that, one day in 1881, a few months earlier than Swami Vivekananda, Rakhal came into contact with Sri Ramakrishna. It was a significant meeting; for the 'father' found his sought for 'son' and the 'son' found the stage to play his destined role. Sri Ramakrishna later on said: 'Before Rakhal came here, I had seen in a vision that the Mother of the universe suddenly brought a boy and, placing him on my lap, said: "Here is your son". I was startled in terror to hear it and exclaimed: "What is that? How can I have a son?" She smiled and explained: "He is not a son in the ordinary worldly sense of the term, but your all-renouncing spiritual son." Thus assured, I was consoled. Rakhal came immediately after I had had the vision, and I recognized him at once as that boy.'

II

Rakhal, drawn by the divine love of the Master and charmed with his sweet personality, started frequenting Dakshineshwar as often as he could. He also used to stay there at times, which later on consummated in his leaving the house finally and coming to live with the Master permanently. Though grown up into a young man of eighteen or nineteen at that time, he, in the presence of the Master, felt like a small child and actually behaved that way. In Sri Ramakrishna, he had found the combined love of his father and mother who had died during his childhood—only infinitely more intensely. The Master, also, treated him very affectionately, just as a loving father treats his helpless infant child. And there was so much naturalness and sincerity about all this that those who saw this strange relationship between the two in all its actions and reactions would enjoy and feel the sweetness of it, rather than be scared away or take it in a wrong light. But it was not only the tender affection of a father that Rakhal received from the Master, but also the guidance of a spiritual preceptor; for the Master was very keen with regard to the spiritual training and development of his disciples. Rakhal was no exception to this and the Master would not hesitate to admonish his loving child if that was found necessary. One day when Rakhal came before the Master, the latter asked him why was there a film of darkness over his face. Had he done anything wrong? Rakhal gaped in wonder, for he could not remember anything of the kind. But when cross-examined, he recollected that he had told a fib in fun. The Master cautioned him not to tell a lie even in jokes.

Under the benign care of Sri Ramakrishna, Rakhal's spiritual life began to progress rapidly. There would be many occasions when his mind would go into deep meditation and he would lose all consciousness of the sense world. It would become necessary for the Master then to come to his aid to bring his mind down to the ordinary plane. He was saturated with the thought of God and his mind would constantly be in communion with Him. Though Rakhal hated publicity in these things, his moving lips, his self-forgetfulness, and his vacant looks would often betray what was going on inside, and the Master, who watched all these things, was beside himself with joy at the knowledge of the spiritual transformation his beloved child was undergoing, and often, he gave expression to this joy. The life at Dakshineshwar was thus going on in the midst of an atmosphere of holiness and hard religious practices, and all who were there floated, as it were, in the stream of spiritual current that the Master had set in motion.

The illness of the Master, however, in 1885, brought about a drift in the current which now wended its way to the city of Calcutta, particularly the garden house of Cossipore, where the Master was brought for better treatment and care during his last days. But, this change, though it looked then to be a break, was really an intensification of the Master's work in a greater degree, as is now acknowledged by all. The last few months at this place were really the seed time of all that was to burst forth in the mighty tree that we see today—the shady, flowery, fruitful movement working itself out in the name of the Master and giving peace and solace to numerous souls all over the world.

The illness of Sri Ramakrishna brought more closely round him his disciples, particularly the younger ones, who were later to renounce the world and found the holy order of monks in the name of the Master. Narendra Nath was the leader of this group. The young disciples threw themselves heart and soul in the devoted service of their *guru* as well as in strenuous spiritual disciplines. Rakhal and others would work hard during the day and would take to harder spiritual practices at night. They knew no fatigue. The Master watched all these and encouraged the boys in their spiritual endeavours. He also knew very well the potential powers of his respective disciples and would guide them accordingly. One day, the Master took Narendra Nath, aside and slowly told him: 'Rakhal has the wisdom and capacity to administer a vast kingdom.' Narendra Nath understood what it meant and, when time came, he demonstrated what he had understood. It was he who had made Rakhal their 'Raja' and it was he who made Rakhal, then Swami Brahmananda, the first President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, which he founded then in the year 1898, after his triumphal return from the West. Swami Vivekananda had thoroughly understood Swami Brahmananda—his loyalty to the cause of the Master, his love for the leader, and his innate spiritual power and administrative capacities. His great faith in Swami Brahmananda is reflected in his statement: 'Others may desert me; but Raja will stand by me till the last.'

III

Unfortunately, however, Swami Vivekananda did not live long to witness the great efficiency and tender care with which his beloved 'Raja' 'ruled' over the spiritual 'kingdom' put under his charge and how this 'kingdom' expanded into an 'empire' and how the loving 'Raja' became the revered 'Maharaj'—the great king—to the numerous 'citizens' of his spiritual domain. Swamiji left his mortal coil in 1902. But to Swami Brahmananda the word of the leader was the law and behind the leader's mission, he saw the will of the Master. So with his normal calmness, deep insight, and rare capacity of understanding of men and matters, Swami Brahmananda set himself ardently to the task he was given to perform, in spite of the great shock and the sad feeling of personal and organizational loss he had sustained at the demise of his beloved 'elder brother' whom he looked upon as 'father'. The method of work of Swami Brahmananda was wonderful. Whatever the situation might be—and there were quite difficult ones at times—and however hard labour a work might need for its execution—and his responsibilities were quite too many and too heavy—he would never lose the calm of his mind and the sweetness of his nature. Even in his later days, when he had to bear the heavy burden of the vastly expanded activities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission and the delicate responsibility of the spiritual and temporal welfare of a large number of monastic workers and the guidance of numerous lay disciples, his equanimity of mind and magnanimity of character were never seen to be disturbed. And not that he was indifferent to things and people round him. Though his mind was set firmly on God, he would not neglect the work of the Master for, to him, the work was nothing short of the worship of God. His keen observation, his deep understanding, his able direction, and his practical suggestions were all reflections of the rare traits of his character and personality and people wondered how a man of God could, at the same time, be a man of such high efficiency and so many varied interests. But there was a secret. And about this secret of work, which he had so successfully mastered in his own life, he would say: 'Give the whole of your mind to God. If there is no wastage of mental energy, with a fraction of your mind, you can do such work that the world will be dazed.'

The sweet aroma of his highly spiritual personality spread its irresistible charm over one and all who came within its orbit. His presence was enough to solve even the most intricate problems either of the organization or of individual life. His decisions and solutions would invariably be correct. Once Swami Saradananda, who was the lifelong secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, had said to a certain worker: 'When I say a thing, you should judge and discriminate whether I am right or wrong; but when Maharaj (meaning Swami Brahmananda) says a thing, you may safely accept that as true without the slightest doubt.' And this was said by one who had varied experience of organizing big works and handling large undertakings.

The activities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, under the able stewardship of Swami Brahmananda, grew steadily and spread considerably. He, as his leader had wanted, raised the humanitarian work of the Mission to a spiritual level. Welfare activities and philanthropic works without a spiritual background lead to egotism and pride and become a hindrance to one's real progress. But the work done with a selfless spirit in a mood of humble dedication and resignation to God conduces to one's spiritual welfare and leads to blissfulness. And Swami Brahmananda saw to it that this spirit of dedication and devotion permeated the entire work that was being done under the banner of the Master. The motto of the Ramakrishna Mission set forth by Swami Vivekananda—*'Ātmano mokṣārtham, jagad-dhitāya ca'*—actually came to be translated in the lives of its workers, and the credit for this difficult achievement goes to the rare genius of its first President Swami Brahmananda, who guided its activities for nearly a quarter of a century.

As the President of this vast organization, Swami Brahmananda had to attend to many duties and make long tours. As a young monk, he had travelled fairly wide to many pilgrim centres and other holy places; but as the President Maharaj of the Math, he had to move about much more. Wherever the Swami went, there was unusual enthusiasm and people showed spontaneous expression of devotion to him and earnest interest in the work of the Mission. He himself generally avoided telling people much about the organizational matters asking for their co-operation expressedly. But his very presence at a place was enough inspiration for the better consolidation of the existing activities or for laying a firm foundation of the future work of the Mission. He simply depended on the will of the Lord and felt glad to see that the Master's message was spreading, bringing peace and solace to numerous afflicted souls.

It has been truly said: 'To see Swami Brahmananda was to feel tangibly that he did not belong to this world. He belonged to a separate plane of existence. He was in a class by himself. He was far above the level of humanity, but still he lived and moved with it as if to fulfil a divine purpose. Even a sceptic would feel this, and even a person knowing nothing about him would realize it. Those who had known both Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Brahmananda used to say that Swami Brahmananda represented some of the characteristics of the Master.' All who had the rare fortune to come under his benign grace, felt that they were under the saving shadow of a big banyan-tree and that they had nothing to fear from.

But the law of nature acts upon all who fall within its jurisdiction, and therefore, 'no body lasts for ever'. Revered Maharaj's body, also, came under its sway and he entered *mahāsamādhi* in 1922—looking blissfully at a vision in which he saw himself playing with his beloved Kṛṣṇa on a full-blown pink lotus floating on the placid waters of the blue Yamunā, as Sri Ramakrishna had once seen about him. The 'bridegroom' was taken away, but the divine joy and spiritual fervour left behind by him still sustains and inspires so many souls aspiring for god-consciousness. We believe that such spiritual personalities, as Swami Brahmananda was, cannot and do not die. Death has no power over them; their entrance into the stage of the world is only to fulfil a divine purpose, and when it is done, they make their exit. Sri Maharaj came to play the part the Master had allotted to him. He played it well—really very well—and went back to the realm whence he had come—the son back to the Father. But the spiritual current set in motion by him is gathering momentum and producing immense power to lead many an ardent soul to the sea of eternity—the Bliss Supreme—the joy of Brahman, which Swami Brahmananda himself represented. And we, who are left behind to look up to him for inspiration and guidance and fill our cups with his benign blessings, pay our humble tribute of love and respect to his revered memory and bless the year which saw his advent a hundred years ago.

'Everyone must have an ideal firmly established in his life. This ideal must never be lowered. The supreme ideal of human life is to know God—God, "who is smaller than the smallest, greater than the greatest". He shines forth always and everywhere. He dwells within you, He dwells within me. He dwells within all creatures, and in the plants and herbs as well. He dwells everywhere. The only difference is that in some He is more apparent, while in others, He is more hidden. The one supreme Spirit pervades everything. Make Him your ideal, Him and Him alone. Make a little effort to realize Him and then you will see what fun it all is; what an inexhaustible fount of joy He is. You have seen enough of the world, now see the other side of life, the real side. "Knock and it shall be opened unto you." There is only a screen hiding the Reality. Remove it, and you will find Him. Apply yourself to the attainment of this ideal and the whole world will be transformed before your eyes.'

SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

MEMORIES OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

By Swami Nirvanananda

I met Maharaj (by which name Swami Brahmananda is known) for the first time in the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama of Varanasi, which is a hospital for the suffering and destitute. The monks and novices of the Ashrama serve the patients with devotion as manifestations of God. Inspired by this noble ideal of the Ramakrishna Order, I joined the Ashrama with an ardent desire to become a monk. I had corresponded with Maharaj before our first meeting, and I had read about him in the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. Besides Maharaj, I saw two other disciples of Sri Ramakrishna in Varanasi, namely Swami Turiyananda and Swami Shivananda. They impressed me as being the very guardians of spirituality.

In the midst of the busy programme of the Sevashrama, the thought would linger in my mind, 'When shall I go and see Maharaj?' His eyes always revealed sympathy and other-worldliness. Sri Ramakrishna had said about him that he had 'the vacant look of a hen hatching her eggs'. His radiant smiling face and the sweetness of his child-like simplicity attracted me to him more and more. At the end of my daily routine, whenever the opportunity presented itself, I never failed to be near Maharaj and to wait on him, just to be permitted to do some personal service. Graciously, he at times bade me prepare food for him or massage his body. I was indeed blessed, although the opportunities were but for very short spans of time. Through such service, sometimes I felt flashes of joy within myself. I was firmly convinced that it was essential for me to have the company of this blessed soul, without whose light I felt there was no way for me to understand or conceive Brahman, Ātman, God, and other entities that exist beyond sense-perception. When Maharaj went elsewhere after having stayed at the Varanasi Ashrama for some time, I had a strong desire to be with him. The prayers of the heart are always answered by God, and so it was with me.

Maharaj had the power to change the atmosphere of a place and to make it vibrate with his spirituality. In his company he could make everybody roll with laughter, and then suddenly, when he became silent, the place would be surcharged with a divine presence. Swami Turiyananda once remarked that Maharaj used to create such an atmosphere around himself that everyone present would be filled with some of his spiritual mood. Many people used to come to Maharaj for the purpose of seeking advice about their problems. But once they were near him, they felt no necessity to ask for any solution. Problems solved themselves in his presence, and people would forget themselves, their egoism, temporal pleasure and pain, and be filled with intense divine bliss.

Whether in the forest or in the city, Maharaj led a very simple life. Wherever he stayed, monks and devotees flocked around him. Those who came to see him went back overwhelmed by his piety and his pure and unselfish love toward all. By a glance or a touch or his mere presence, he could raise the minds of others to a high level and change their very lives. This will be apparent from the following incident in his life which we will mention here.

Devendranath Bose was a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna and friendly with all his direct disciples, particularly with Swami Akhandananda. After the passing away of the Master, Deven Babu became the estate manager of the Maharaja of Kashim Bazar, and for many years, he did not come to see the monks.

One day, Swami Akhandananda met Deven

Babu by chance and brought him to the Belur Math. Maharaj was at the monastery at the time. On seeing Deven Babu after such a long interval, he was particularly gracious to him. Afterwards, Maharaj said to Swami Akhandananda: 'Well, Gangadhar, what has happened to your Deven? He has changed very much—in movements, manners, everything. His face has a worldly expression, and he dresses like a dandy. Has he forgotten the Master and all of us?'

Swami Akhandananda did not know what to say. But the next time he saw Deven Babu, he told him in the course of conversation what Maharaj had said about him.

'I don't know what has happened to me. I am not happy', said Deven Babu.

After a few days, Deven Babu came to see Maharaj. I was sitting in front of Maharaj's room. Deven Babu asked me: 'Where is Maharaj?'

I said to him: 'Please take your seat. Maharaj is in his room. I shall inform him of your arrival.'

Deven Babu's great restlessness was clearly visible, and he was unable to sit still. He was so anxious to see Maharaj that he would not wait for him to come out of his room. He rushed in, just as Maharaj was preparing to meet him. Seeing Deven Babu, Maharaj silently went to him. He placed his hand on Deven Babu's chest, stroked it several times, and said: 'What has happened, Deven Babu? Everything will be all right. Think of the Master!'

Immediately there was a complete change in Deven Babu. He bowed down before Maharaj and said: 'Maharaj, all my worldliness is wiped out. How far I had fallen! But your grace and blessings have lifted me up. Now I have no more sorrows and troubles.'

Maharaj came out to the portico with Deven Babu and asked me to give him *prasāda*. From that day on, Deven Babu used to come quite often to see Maharaj. The experience he had had on the occasion left a lasting effect on him.

Long after the passing away of Maharaj, I requested Deven Babu to write an introduction to the original Bengali edition of the *The Spiritual Teachings of Swami Brahmananda*. The following portion of what he wrote is especially significant: 'Those who came in close contact with the spiritual son of the Master say that Maharaj was endowed with immeasurable spiritual splendour and that his spiritual energy flowed like torrents of rain in a hundred directions. But nobody knew how so much power, so much energy, could remain so quietly in this mortal frame.

'The latent power of an electric wire is known only on touching it. We hear that the body of a realized soul is not made of matter, but Spirit. But that truth could not be understood even while coming in touch with this divine man. With what heavenly love he kept us deluded!'

Deven Babu asked me: 'Do you remember the occasion when I went to see Maharaj? When he touched my chest with his hand, I felt a sudden shock. Immediately I remembered my past; love for God and yearning for realization filled me, and all the memories of the Master came alive again in my mind. As a result, the course of my life was altogether changed.'

An example of Maharaj's child-like simplicity and his sense of humour is given in the following story.

At Belur Math, one day, Maharaj had a little indigestion, so he told me that he would not eat anything that evening. I reported this to Swami Premananda when he asked about Maharaj's dinner.

Maharaj went to bed. There was a cooler in the room next to his, and many kinds of sweets were stored in it. At four o'clock in the morning Maharaj felt hungry, went to the cooler, and ate all the sweets. It was quite a quantity.

Later in the morning, as usual, Swami Premananda came to pay his respects to

Maharaj. He inquired about his health, and Maharaj complained like a little boy: 'Oh, I am hungry, and they haven't given me anything to eat yet!' Hearing this, I ran to the cooler to find something for him to eat—but it was empty.

Swami Premananda asked me: 'What happened? Did you leave the cooler open so that a cat may have gotten in and eaten all the food? Were you so careless?'

I answered: 'I can't understand it! When I looked just now, the cooler was still closed, and yet the food has been taken; so I can't see how a cat could have entered.'

Then Maharaj smiled and said to Swami Premananda: 'Yes, Brother Baburam, a big cat came and entered the cooler; in fact, it was so big that it was able to open and close it!' And he pointed himself out as the 'big cat'.

Maharaj laid much stress on the significance of the Master's advent. When such an incarnation comes to earth, much power is manifested, and with little effort a spiritual aspirant becomes illumined.

One day, Maharaj said to M., the recorder of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*: 'The Master came this time to make a bridge between *jīva* and Śiva (man and God). See how easy it has now become to realize the Lord!'

Maharaj used to tell us: 'Don't waste this opportunity! Be up and doing! Once you lose this chance, you will regret it. Sri Ramakrishna was the epitome of truth. Mould your lives according to this ideal. Those of you who are working in the hospital will also be able to reach the goal and realize the Reality through the practice of pure, unselfish work.'

MRS. BLODGETT'S REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA*

BY SWAMI ATMAGHANANANDA

From the first time Miss Josephine MacLeod heard Swami Vivekananda speak, she recognized that she was in the presence of a unique personality. That she also began to sense, very early, his importance as a figure in the history of man's spiritual evolution is evident from the fact that she preserved a number of documents which give insight into important phases of his character and work. One of these is a long letter from the now well-known Mrs. Blodgett who heard Swamiji at the Parliament of Religions and who later was his hostess when he visited California. Interesting as the letter is in itself, it becomes even more so when we read it in conjunction with what Swamiji himself wrote about its writer and what Miss MacLeod tells us of her in her own vivid reminiscences.

I

On the 27th of December 1899, Swami Vivekananda wrote a letter to Miss Mary Hale from Los Angeles. In the course of it he remarked: 'It is exactly like northern Indian winter here—only some days a little warmer. The roses are here and the beautiful palms. Barley is in the fields—the roses and many other flowers round about the cottage where I live. Mrs. Blodgett, my host[ess], is a Chicago lady. Fat, old, and extremely witty. She heard me in Chicago and is very motherly.'

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* The letter of Mrs. S. K. Blodgett containing her reminiscences of Swamiji has not previously been published in full, though a good portion of it has appeared in *Vedanta and the West*, November-December 1953 and 1962 (pages 176-77 and 41-43 respectively) and a few sentences have been used even earlier in *Vivekananda: A Biography*, by Swami Nikhilananda. For its use here and its arrangement in this article we are indebted to the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York.

How Swamiji came to meet Mrs. S. K. Blodgett has been told by Miss Josephine MacLeod in her reminiscences of Swamiji, dictated, a number of years before her death. The time she speaks of was during the first half of November 1899:

'It was while the Swami was at Ridgely Manor that a letter came from a lady unknown to us to say our only brother was very ill in Los Angeles and that she thought he would die and we ought to know it. So my sister said to me, "I think you must go". And I said, "Of course". Within two hours I was packed, the horses were at the door, we had four miles to drive to a railway station, and as I went out Swami put up his hand and said some Sanskrit blessing and then he called out: "Get up some classes and I will come."'

'I went straight to Los Angeles and in a small white cottage covered with roses, on the outskirts of the city, lay my brother, very ill. But over his head was a life-size picture of Vivekananda. I had not seen my brother for ten years, so I had an hour's talk with him, saw he was very ill, and went out to see our hostess, Mrs. Blodgett. I said to her; "My brother is very ill." She said: "Yes." "I think he will die", I said. She said: "Yes." "May he die here?" I asked. She said, "Oh, yes." Then I said, "Who is that man whose portrait is over my brother's bed?" She drew herself up with all the dignity of her seventy years and said: "If ever there was a God on earth, that is the man." I said: "What do you know about him?" She answered: "I was at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893, and when that young man got up and said, 'Sisters and Brothers of America', seven thousand people rose to their feet as a tribute to something they knew not what. When it was over and I saw scores of women walking over the benches to get near him, I said to myself: 'Well, my lad, if you can resist that onslaught you are indeed a God.'" Then I said to Mrs. Blodgett: "I know him." "You know him?" she asked. I said: "Yes, I left him in a little village of two hundred people in the Catskill Mountains in New York." She said: "You know him?" I said: "Why don't you ask him here?" She said: "To my cottage?" "He will come", I told her.

'In three weeks my brother was dead, and in six weeks Swamiji was there and began his classes on the Pacific Coast.

'We were Mrs. Blodgett's guests for months. This little cottage had three bedrooms, a kitchen, a dining-room, and a sitting-room. Every morning we would hear Swami chanting his Sanskrit from the bath, which was just off the kitchen. He would come out with tousled hair and get ready for breakfast. Mrs. Blodgett made delicious pancakes and these we would eat at the kitchen table, Swami sitting with us. And such discourses he would have with Mrs. Blodgett, such repartee, she talking of the villainy of men and he talking of the even greater wickedness of women. Mrs. Blodgett seldom went to hear him lecture, saying her duty was to give us delicious meals when we got back.'

II

It is not until 1902 that we hear of Mrs. Blodgett again. But evidently Miss MacLeod had been in touch with her during the intervening years, for on September 2 of that year we find Mrs. Blodgett writing a touchingly graphic letter to the younger woman who had stayed so long with her in 1899 as her guest:

My Beloved Girl,

Today your letter from Messena Springs came, giving your address. How I wish you were here with me. I have so often wished to be near you in these first sad days, when a loss complete and without remedy has so suddenly fallen upon your heart in the passing away of a loved and rare companionship. I am ever recalling those swift, bright days in that never to be forgotten winter, lived in simple freedom and kindliness. We could not choose but to be happy and good. And now while I share with all who knew and loved him a deep sense of loss, it would be an impertinence to measure your sorrow and loss by my own, so closely have you been associated with him in his intimate friendship with your family. I knew him personally but a short time, yet in that time I could but see in a hundred ways the child side of Swamiji's character, which was a constant appeal to the Mother quality in all good women. He depended upon those near him in a way which brought him very nearly one's heart. I think the Mead sisters must have remarked this side of Swamiji. Possessing as he did an almost inexhaustible knowledge of things old as the world—a sage and philosopher—he yet appeared to me to lack utterly the commercial knowledge which so distinguish[es] men of the Western world. You were constantly rendering him some apparently trifling service in the everyday homely happenings of our daily life, he in some small way requiring to be set right. That which we mother and care for in little, seemingly inconsequent ways must through the very nature of our care weave a world of tenderness around the object of our love—until in some sad day we are robbed of the divine privilege of loving service and are left like 'Rachel mourning for her children because they are not'. Thus I know, aside from the loss of a delightful and rare companion, the fact alone of your generous service brought him very near to you. One day busy with my work, Swamiji absorbed with his curries and *chapattis*, I spoke to him of you, when he said: 'Ah, yes! Jo is the sweetest spirit of us all.'—He would come home from a lecture where he was compelled to break away from his audience, so eagerly would they gather around him—come rushing into the kitchen like a boy released from school, with, 'Now we will cook'. The prophet and sage would disappear, to reveal the child side or simplicity of character. Presently 'Jo' would appear and discover the culprit among pots and pans in his fine dress, who was by thrifty, watchful 'Jo' admonished to change to his home garments. Ah, those pleasant 'Tea Party' days, as you termed them. How we used to laugh. Do you remember the time he was showing me how he wound his turban about his head and you were begging him to hasten as he was already due at the lecture room. I said, 'Swami, don't hurry. You are like a man on his way to be hung. The crowd was jostling each other to reach the place of execution, when he called out, *"Don't* hurry. There will be nothing interesting until I get there". I assure you, Swami, there will be nothing interesting until you get there.' This so pleased him that often afterwards he would say, 'There will be nothing interesting 'til I get there', and laugh like a boy. Just now I recall a morning quite an audience had gathered at our house to listen to the learned Hindoo, who sat with downcast eyes and impenetrable face while his audience waited. His meditations over, he raised his eyes to Mrs. Leggett's face and asked, like a simple child, 'What shall I say?' This gifted man, possessing the subtle power of delighting an intellectual audience, to ask for a theme! There appeared to me in this question an exquisite touch of confidence in her judgment in suggesting a subject suitable to the occasion. A most interesting portion of the day you lost. In the early morning when you and your sister would be sleeping, he would come in for his morning plunge in the bath. Soon his deep, rich voice would be heard in something resembling a solemn chant. Though 'Sanscrit' [was] an unknown tongue to me, I yet caught the spirit of it all, and these early morning devotions are among my sweetest recollections of the great Hindoo. In the homely old-fashioned kitchen you and I have seen Swamiji at his best. He could let his thoughts have untrammelled [s]way.

Do you remember how interesting and instructive one morning he was in one of his inspirational moods? Something in the paper, an abused wife or maltreated child, had aroused my ire, when I vehemently protested against the utter abomination of a system of laws which permitted the indiscriminate production of a mongrel race of children who through heredity and environment were prenatally doomed to be paupers, lunatics, and criminals to prey upon the better born. My plea was for the enactment of a law to save the wretched from themselves by preventing worthless characters—'boozy' fathers and fool mothers—from forcing upon the world a blasphemy against God and a shameful profanation of His 'image and likeness' in [the] shape of half-born children. Swamiji replied by taking us back to the time when a man's choice of a wife was emphasized with a club, step by step down through the ages showing the gradual amelioration of the condition of women. The evolution of thought had been broadening and developing for them greater freedom and happiness. The central idea in this morning's talk was that all great reforms had been developed slowly; otherwise, the order and equilibrium of the universe would be disturbed and result in chaos. Of course, I cannot follow him in detail or give his words. I can only give his idea. A curious thing to me, while I lost not a word [n]or failed to grasp the point he would make, [I] have yet found it impossible to repeat but fragmentary utterances of his. I question if one could repeat him in his inspirations. At such moments, one gave oneself up to the joy of listening. I heard very few of Swamiji's public lectures. My age and household duties gave me no choice but like Martha to sit in the house. To follow in detail our pleasant hours at that time would be like one['s] repeating a dream from which one awoke too soon. Were you present at a lecture when one of those ladies who love to make themselves conspicuous by some ill-timed remark asked: 'Swami, who is it who support the monks in your country? There are so many of them, you know.' Like a flash Swami replied: 'The same who support the clergy in your country, madam. The women!' The audience laughed. Madam was for the time effaced and Swamiji proceeded with his lecture. Another time I was at a lecture of his in the Masonic Temple in Chicago. A noted clergyman present said: 'You believe in creeds, do you not, monk?' 'Oh, yes,' said Swami, 'while you need them. You plant an acorn for a tree and build around it a little fence to keep away the pigs and goats. But when your acorn has grown to a tall, spreading tree, you do not need your little fence.' He was never at a loss—always equal to the occasion. And now 'after life's fitful fever he sleeps well', never to be awakened to the discords and tumults of this life, or to be reclothed with an earthly body (in my belief), since this is true that we shall see him no more. Let us hope that in some distant star, above a world of separation and pain, his gentle spirit may again lead and influence the spirits of men. India has sustained a great loss in her Americanized son, who while he sacrificed no essential feature of their faith, yet saw things undreamed of by them, to their betterment and happiness. Nivedita, what will she do without the inspiration of his presence? My letter has grown to such length I have no time to ask many questions I would like [to]. Did Mrs. Bull return to America with you? You speak of returning some time to Japan. Are you so enamored of the East that you cannot bide a wee with us? How I would love to see you some day in the future. I will tell all about myself—a most interesting theme. I trust you may be benefited at the springs. I so much wanted you to go to Heidelberg or some of those German springs. Yet we may have healing waters too.

Miss Spencer telephoned for your address. She remembered 'Hatfield House' but lost the rest. Write me when you can. Now more than ever I want to keep in touch with you.

Remember me most kindly to your sister. She has been dear to me and all who love you. Loving you always, I am sincerely,

Mrs. Blodgett

This I know will be an unsatisfactory letter. I have written in such rushing haste. Kate and me [sic] are again alone. I am *washing*, ironing, cooking. A large yard running over with *bloom* to care for and water. And my recreations I must catch on the wing. For an aged lady I [am] being put through my paces, but we are very pleasantly located and I am a great housekeeper.

AJĀTAŚATRU'S INSTRUCTION TO BĀLĀKI

By Sri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer

This instruction is set forth in the first section of the second chapter of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.* It is widely known as 'Ajātaśatru Brāhmaṇa'. It consists of twenty brief passages of which the first twelve mention Bālāki's notions of Brahman which are shown to be inadequate by Ajātaśatru. The remaining eight passages are the really important ones from the standpoint of philosophy, especially Advaita Vedānta. They make an approach to the highest reality from the epistemological standpoint and seek to ascertain the ultimate subject of all experience. *Dṛk* and *dṛśya*—subject and object—are two fundamentally different things having nothing in common. In ordinary experience, they are given in close association with each other, and the task of philosophy is to show that the relationship is not inevitable and that *dṛk* can be separated from *dṛśya.* One and the same entity, the *jīva,* cannot be both subject and object. The subject can never be the object and the object can never be the subject. The section of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* that we have set out to study seeks to show that the Acosmic Absolute is the only ultimate subject, and consequently, the only experiencer. It analyses the states of dream and dreamless sleep and shows that the subject which responds to sound, touch, and other stimuli from the external world is neither the physical body nor the sense-organs nor the mind nor the vital force. It is not even the individual self, but the Supreme Self, the Unconditioned Brahman. From the ontological standpoint, Nirguṇa Brahman is ascertained to be the highest reality; from the epistemological standpoint, the same Nirguṇa Brahman is ascertained to be the ultimate subject of experience. There can be no final rift between being and knowing. That the two merge in the final stages is taught in various sections of the Upaniṣads. That is exactly the significance of the *mahāvākyas* like '*Tattvam-asi*' and '*Aham Brahmāsmi.*'

The analysis of the three states (*avasthā traya*) yields very useful results and we find that the Upaniṣads frequently employ this method to great purpose. It roughly answers to J. S. Mill's conception of the 'Method of difference'. The essence of the method is to establish causal relationship between two given facts by eliminating one by one all the adventitious circumstances. The success of the method will obviously depend on our ability to separate the attendant circumstances and eliminate them one by one and watch the result. Under laboratory conditions of study, it will be easy to vary one circumstance at a time and note down the result. But not all subjects can be made to submit to laboratory conditions. Where that is not possible, we may rely on certain favourable circumstances which turn up in the course of nature and seek to ascertain real causal connections. In Western logic, this method is known as 'Natural Experiment', and students of astronomy generally fall back on it to study heavenly phenomena. When a total solar eclipse occurs, it provides specially favourable conditions to study the planetary positions in the heavens during day time. To the student of philosophy who seeks to ascertain the true nature of his self, such a favourable situation is furnished by the three states, that of waking, dream, and dreamless sleep, through which all of us pass almost every day. Western philosophers have not evinced much interest in the metaphysical study of these states, though Sigmund Freud has studied the phenomenon of dreams from the purely psychological standpoint. Bosanquet, however, has said in one place that, if we analyse properly the experiences of a normal individual lasting for a single day, we could securely establish that the highest reality is the Absolute as the Idealistic school of philosophers understand it. In the Upaniṣads as well as in Advaita Vedānta, the analysis of the experiences of a normal individual is done in a thorough-going manner and with very good results.

The instruction takes the form of a dialogue between Bālāki and Ajātaśatru, King of Kāśī. Bālāki is the son of Balākā and a scion of the Garga family. He is therefore known as Gārgya also. He was a scholar, or, at least, thought himself to be one. He was also a good speaker. Being self-conscious and proud of his learning and attainments, he went about offering to instruct people in *brahma-vidyā*. On one occasion, he went to King Ajātaśatru and said: 'I will teach you about Brahman.' The latter seized the opportunity and said that he would make a gift of a thousand cows for the mere offer. That is because he, too, wanted to show himself to be a patron of learning and eager to learn as well. Scholars were in the habit of flocking to the court of King Janaka and it was widely known that King Janaka was both benevolent and eager to learn. Ajātaśatru was a little jealous of the reputation that Janaka had earned for himself and, in the desire to acquire a similar reputation for himself, made large offers to scholars who came up to him. He was pleased to note that at least one scholar of some eminence turned up at his court and undertook to instruct him.

Straightway the instruction begins and, as Bālāki unfolds his conceptions of Brahman one by one, the King contradicts him at every step saying that he is already aware of these notions, that they are only fit supports for meditation, and though they may be useful in that sense, they can never do justice to the true nature of Brahman. One who held such notions knew only the Conditioned Brahman which possesses attributes, and therefore, serves as an excellent aid for meditative exercise. As the King was thus actively participating in the instruction and not merely listening to it passively, the dialogue becomes lively and relieves the tedium and monotony which generally characterize expositions of high philosophical themes. As all the conceptions put forward by Bālāki fall short of the ultimate Truth, they only constitute the *prima facie* view (*pūrvapakṣa*) and what follows after Bālāki has had his say gradually prepares the ground for the conclusion that is to follow (*siddhānta*). It is condensed in the 'secret name' (*upaniṣad*) which is 'Truth of truth' (*satyasya satyam*). The method of developing a theme by first stating the *prima facie* view and the conclusion later has the great merit of establishing the latter after a fair and full consideration of all possible objections from diverse points of view. When Bālāki discovers that he has yet to learn about the true nature of Brahman, the conceit falls from him and he unhesitatingly offers to sit at the feet of the King as any other student would do. His willingness to take lessons from Ajātaśatru is an object lesson in regard to the behaviour of students.

One who is athirst for knowledge, specially the saving knowledge, must cast off pride and the sense of superiority based on birth and approach the teacher, whoever he may be, in all humility. Arrogance ill accords with the desire to learn. We witness therefore the strange spectacle of a Brāhmaṇa who came to teach sitting down to learn from a Kṣatriya.

Ajātaśatru, however, realized that it was contrary to accepted practice that a Brāhmaṇa should become his disciple. To save himself the embarrassment and also to put Bālāki at his ease, he adopted a somewhat novel mode of instruction. He took Bālāki by the hand and both went to a part of the palace where a man was fast asleep. The King tried to wake him up by calling him by certain names, but since he did not wake up, he resorted to physical pressure and pushed the man by his hand this side and that. Then the man woke up. The King put two questions to Bālāki: 'Where was this man when he was asleep and whence did he come?' Bālāki did not know the answer. That provided the occasion for the King to expatiate further on the theme. Thus there was accommodation on both sides and it created the right kind of atmosphere for the instruction that was to follow.

Bālāki's knowledge of Brahman was confined to the Conditioned One, which in its unmanifest state is known as Īśvara, in its partially manifest state as Hiraṇyagarbha and Sūtrātman, and in its fully manifest state as Virāt or Vaiśvānara. This conception admits of Brahman being viewed as an object in relation to a subject and as possessed of attributes. As an object it becomes an aid or support for devout meditation. One may meditate on Saguṇa Brahman in its real nature as the Creator, Sustainer, and Destroyer of the universe. The formula for worship laid down in the Śāṇḍilya-vidyā[1] has reference to this notion: 'With a calm and composed mind, one must meditate on Brahman (*tat*) as the origin (*ja*), the absorber (*la*), and sustainer (*an*) of the universe.' This cryptic formula is set forth more fully and commended for medtiation to Bhṛgu by his father Varuṇa.[2] Occupying a slightly lower place is the mystic formula '*Om*', whose importance as an aid to meditation is set forth in many Upaniṣads.[3] The whole of the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* is taken up with the description of the details of meditation on '*Om*'. In several contexts, Śaṅkara has stated that the syllable '*Om*' is the nearest equivalent of Brahman. Those who are unable to rise to this level of meditation may concentrate their minds on some concrete object like the sun. Bālāki's twelve notions of Brahman, as sun, moon, lightning, and so forth, are such tangible aids for worship. Each of these conceptions of Brahman has its own special attributes, and he who worships Brahman as possessed of particular attributes gets appropriate rewards. He will be endowed with health and strength, become powerful, live for the full term, get name and fame, and his progeny will never become extinct. There is close correspondence between the attributes meditated upon and the results that follow.

Though these conceptions of Brahman, the attributes which they possess, and the rewards which the meditation brings, all belong to the sphere of ignorance, they are not without their use. They provide excellent discipline to the mind in concentration, not allowing it to turn this side or that, but to be solely occupied with a steady stream of like thoughts. Śaṅkara has defined meditation (*dhyāna*) as 'the process of concentrating the mind on some resting place (*pratīka*) or support approved by the scriptures and giving rise to a chain of homogeneous thoughts without the interruption of anything of a contrary nature.'[4] Worship (*upāsanā*) is the same as meditation and it has also been defined in almost identical terms.[5] These definitions make it clear that meditations are excellent mental exercises. They purify the mind of its age-long impurities and make it fit to receive the highest knowledge when it comes. They clear the mind of all hatred also and prepare it for extending its sphere of love. Unbounded knowledge and unlimited love raise the human being to the level of Īśvara. That is the real purpose of the meditative exercises laid down in the Upaniṣads. The variety of conceptions prescribed as aids to meditation is intended to suit different tastes and temperaments. Ānandagiri, commenting on *Māṇḍūkya-Kārikā* (III.16), writes: 'Men of poor understanding worship the Kārya Brahman (Virāj), those of average intellect worship the Kāraṇa Brahman (Īśvara), and men of the highest intellect worship the non-dual Brahman.' Even idol worship has its place. By gradual stages, worship must learn to do without concrete aids and substitute the recitation of *mantras* and *stotras* in place of idols. Deep concentration is for people still higher up. Meditation on the formula 'I am He' (*So'ham*) is for the highest. That King Ajātaśatru treats Bālāki's notions of Brahman as fit aids for meditation is clear from his question: 'Do you know only this much?' It only means that there is something more than what Bālāki knows and not that what he knows is absolutely useless. If he had intended the latter, he would have said: 'You know nothing.'

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[1] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, III.14.1.

[2] *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, III.1.

[3] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, I.2.15; *Praśna Upaniṣad*, V; *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, II.2.4; *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, I.8.

[4] *Memorial Edition of Śaṅkara's Works*, Vol. VII, p. 431 and Vol. XIII, p. 255.

From the conception of the Absolute as the object of worship to the conception of the Absolute as the ultimate subject of all experience is not a far cry. The transition takes place by gradual and almost imperceptible stages. From the worship of the sun, for example, we are asked to rise to the realization that the Person who animates the sun and the Person who is dwelling in the inmost depth of our hearts is the same.[6] From the worship of the gods who are supposed to be outside of us, we are asked to rise to the notion that the real object of worship is within us and not without.[7] We are told that, if we worship God with a sense of difference between the worshipper and the worshipped, we are no better than beasts.[8] Worship, therefore, is at its best when the worshipper feels his identity with the Brahman he is worshipping. It must cease to have anything to do with material gains, but become the prayer of the spirit which is eager to be led 'from unreality to Reality, from darkness to Light, and from death to Immortality'.[9] Thus worship, like all things finite, transcends itself and points to something higher. In deep communion, the difference between the worshipper and worshipped is lost and only the consciousness which lights up both remains.

This is the light which illumines all the states of our mind whether they relate to worship or the acquisition of knowledge. It is the subject of all experience. It reveals the objects of the real world when we are awake and also the presentations of the dream state. When we pass to the state of dreamless sleep and nothing is presented to the mind, consciousness still remains to show that nothing is perceived. It is the presence of consciousness as the constant witness (*sākṣin*) that enables us to explain when we wake up that 'we slept well and that we saw nothing'. Since the falling away of the presentations does not affect the underlying consciousness, but leaves it untouched, we have to conclude that there is no vital or organic connection between them. Just as bubbles, foam, and waves rise on the calm surface of the water and finally subside therein, even so these presentations are mere appearances of the consciousness which is their substrate. In the final analysis, these states of the mind (*vṛttis*), including worship, are only superimpositions on Pure Consciousness.

To demonstrate that the real Self is the ultimate experiencer, the condition of sleep is more helpful than the waking state where there are complicating factors which are difficult to eliminate. For one thing, the sense-organs are in intimate touch with the objects of the external world and are, so to say, in their grip. The Upaniṣad speaks of the former as '*grahas*' and the latter as '*atigrahas*'.[10] For another, there is the light of the sun which may lead us to think that objects are revealed by that light. These two factors are absent in the dream state, and consequently, it is easier to separate the subject (*dṛk*) from the object (*dṛśya*). 'Dream exhibits the self-luminous nature of the self which is not quite manifest in the waking state owing to the contact of the sense-organs with objects as well as the presence of the light of the sun.'[11] Śaṅkara explains why Ajātaśatru took Bālāki to a man who was asleep and not to one who was awake: 'In the waking state, the Being whom Bālāki put forward as Brahman (the individual self), which is the agent and experiencer, is in touch with the sense-organs, so also is the Being put forward by Ajātaśatru (the Supreme Self). The grounds of differentiation between the two are, therefore, hard to determine as they are mixed up. The experiencer and the experienced, being closely bound up in the waking state, cannot be shown separately.'[12]

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[5] *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, Part 2, p. 9.

[6] *Īśā Upaniṣad*, 16.

[7] *Kena Upaniṣad*, I.4-8.

[8] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I.4.10.

[9] *Ibid.*, I.3.28.

The sleeping man was called by the names of the deities which preside over the sense-organs, mind, and vital force. The point in addressing the man by these unfamiliar names is that the divinites cannot be asleep though the sense-organs and the mind may be quiescent and hence they must respond to the sound, if they are the real experiencers. Since there was no response, it was conclusively proved that the sense-organs and the mind are not the subject of experience.[13] It cannot be even the vital force, for in the Upaniṣads it is said that it never goes to sleep, but keeps watch without intermission.[14] Hence it should not fail to respond if it were the subject. Since there is no response, we have to conclude that the vital force (*prāṇa*) is not the real experiencer. Śaṅkara gives another reason also. Since the sense-organs and the mind are absorbed in it in the state of sleep and come out of it in the waking state, we must suppose that it is a complex entity. Since it is itself differentiated five-fold, it becomes still more complex. What is made up of many elements must necessarily serve the purpose of some other entity. This other entity must be the conscious Self. By this process of gradual elimination, Ajātaśatru conclusively demonstrates that the body, the sense-organs, the mind, and the vital force are not the experiencers. They belong to the category of the experienced. The object can never become the subject. In answer to the two questions, 'When this Being, full of consciousness, was asleep, where was it then and whence did it come?', Ajātaśatru states further: 'When this Being, full of consciousness, is asleep, it absorbs at the time the functions of the organs through its own consciousness and lies in the *ākāśa* that is in the heart. When this Being absorbs them, it is called *svapiti*.' The '*ākāśa*' in the heart is no other than the Supreme Self. The individual self in the state of profound sleep comes to its own place. It does so through the seventy-two thousand arteries which branch out from the heart and pervade the entire body. Resting in its own place, the Self then does not know anything. It has no particular experiences. Hence it is in the enjoyment of perfect bliss for which the nearest parallel is the happiness of a baby or of an emperor or of a noble Brāhmaṇa.

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[10] *Ibid.*, III.2.1.

[11] *Memorial Edition of Śaṅkara's Works*, Vol. III, p. 566.

[12] Swami Madhavananda's translation is adopted throughout this paper.

[13] Śaṅkara adds another reason to show why the sense-organs cannot be the subject of experience. The sense of sight, of hearing, and of touch are all separate organs. In the absence of another entity which could connect and co-ordinate the separate impressions, memory and recognition would become impossible.

[14] *Praśna Upaniṣad*, IV.3; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. IV.3.12.

Through these arteries the finite self may come down a bit and rest in the intellect which is located in the heart. It then experiences dreams, 'becomes an emperor, as it were, and attains states high or low, as it were'. 'As an emperor, taking his citizens, moves about as he pleases in his own territory, so does it, thus taking the organs, move about as it pleases in its own body.' In this condition, the intellect is functioning, but not the sense-organs which are all absorbed in it.

One step lower down brings the finite self to the state of waking, wherein the intellect expands and the sense-organs which were latent begin to function. The world of objects makes its impact on them and the resulting sensations are worked up by the mind into judgements such as, 'this object is a tree', 'that object is a man'. These are the three states through which the finite self passes owing to its identification with the intellect. When the intellect expands, the finite self comes to the waking state and when it contracts, it finds itself experiencing dreams. When it ceases to function, there are no particular experiences and that is the state of profound sleep for the finite self. It is like the image of the sun expanding or contracting according as the water in a lake is much or little and the same image disappearing altogether when all the water gets dried up. Just as the reflected image of the sun goes back to its source when there is no water in the lake, even so, the finite self, shedding all its adjuncts in the state of dreamless sleep, rises to its true stature and shines in its native splendour as the Supreme Self. Just as the water is the reflecting medium for the sun, even so, the intellect is the medium for the Supreme Self. Like the water, the intellect is an adventitious adjunct (*upādhi*). The three states, therefore, do not really belong to the Self. They are superimpositions on it.

The statement that the sleeping man wakes up when he is pushed this side and that and the further point that he passes from one state to another appear to make out that the experiencer is the individual self. The statement in the last paragraph, 'as from a fire tiny sparks fly in all directions', lends further support to this view. But it does not square with the assertion that 'from this Self emanate all organs, all worlds, all gods, and all beings'. In a previous paragraph (17), it is stated that the self in the state of profound sleep 'lies in the *ākāśa* that is in the heart'. The '*ākāśa* in the heart' means the Supreme Self, as is borne out by several Upaniṣads.[15] The individual self does not rest there as in a place different from itself. The *ākāśa* is not the container and the individual self what is contained in it. It is to dispel such wrong notions that Ajātaśatru addressed the two questions mentioned above. The second question, 'Whence did it come?' looks redundant because, ordinarily, a man who wants to go somewhere starts from the very place where he has been resting and from nowhere else. But the question will cease to be redundant if we realize that the Self was not in any place different from itself and that it did not come from any place different from itself. It was in its own place, absolutely untouched by experiences of every kind. Its utter purity and transcendence are brought out by the two questions.

The example of tiny sparks coming out of fire should not be pressed too far. It is only intended to elucidate a transcendental truth by means of the nearest possible analogy. But these analogies should never be taken literally, for they will never prove adequate to the truths of a higher plane. Just as sparks get separated from their source, even so the finite selves get separated from their source and, forgetful of their real nature, they imagine themselves to be agents and enjoyers, to be transmigrating, subject to birth and death, and so forth. When their eyes are opened by a competent *guru,* they realize their true nature and pass beyond all the pairs of opposites.

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[15] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI.8.1; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV.3.21.

It is nowhere stated in the Upaniṣads that the finite self is either a modification of Brahman or that it is one of the things created by Brahman. Nor is it possible to establish any kind of intelligible relationship between Brahman and the individual self. Śaṅkara examines several possible relationships such as whole and part, organism and constituent members, cause and effect, and shows that they are all ridden by inner contradictions. Even the category of identity and difference fares no better. It is not necessary to summarize the reasons adduced by Śaṅkara to show the inadequacy of these conceptions to the relationship between Brahman and the individual self. The failure of all attempts to relate them only proves that the intitial assumption is wrong. If we create a difference where, in reality, there is none, it is no wonder that all our efforts to bring them into relationship prove infructuous.

Since we are unable to relate them, can we admit that they are two independent entities? No, for the human mind refuses to accept two ultimate realities. The Upaniṣads are unequivocal on this point. They maintain that reality is one without a second. They add that he who sees difference, as it were, goes from death to death. Nor can one of them be made subordinate to the other. Both are sentient principles and hence both have equal status. Hence we have to conclude that there is only one sentient entity and that is the subject of all experience. Viewed ontologically, it is the Acosmic Absolute and viewed epistemologically, it is the ultimate experiencer.

It is therefore that Śaṅkara says: 'There are two things—the Seer and the seen (Subject and object)—different from each other; (of these) the Seer is Brahman and the seen is Māyā—thus trumpets all Vedānta.'[16]

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[16] *Brahmajñānāvalīmālā*, 17.

ECHOES OF VEDĀNTA IN THE POETRY OF ENGLAND

By Principal Jogiraj Basu

In this essay we shall make an attempt to show how some doctrines of Vedānta have been unwittingly expressed and confirmed by some of the poets of England.

The Upaniṣads assert in unmistakable terms that the whole universe of names and forms, the world of being and becoming springs from the supreme Godhead, the eternal existence, consciousness, and bliss, and at the time of dissolution returns to its fountain-head. Says the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*: 'All these beings spring from the supreme Being, are sustained by it, and return to the same supreme Being at the time of dissolution.' Our life on earth is, in fact, a sojourn. The senses cloud our vision and lead us further away from our spiritual mooring as we come of age. The senses dupe us and turn us into worldlings. The eternal and boundless supreme Soul is, as it were, limited by the sense organs and the body. The Universal Soul shackled by the body becomes the individual soul; the Paramātman becomes the *jīvātman*. Because of the presence of the Soul, the spark of the Divine; the senses or the attractions fail to dupe man fully from his divine mission. This metaphysical conviction finds expression in the poems of many English poets. Wordsworth, for example, in his famous 'Immortality Ode' sings in mystic rapture:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting
The soul that rises with us, our life's star
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness
And not in utter nakedness
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home.

Our life on earth is a preparation for the life hereafter; it is a quest after the source of our being. Notwithstanding the worldly comforts and carnal pleasures, there is a sense of discontent and dissatisfaction. Matthew Arnold, the noted English bard, calls it 'divine discontent.' According to him, though man moves further and further away from his source as he comes of age, still this 'divine discontent' keeps up the spiritual urge in him, and ultimately turns his mind to God. Though man moves away from the shore of the Eternal Ocean of Divinity, and walks into inland, still from time to time, in Arnold's language, he is visited by the 'scents and murmurs of the infinite sea'. Francis Thompson, the mystic poet, calls this divine discontent or divine urge in man 'hound of heaven', in his well-known poem similarly entitled. Here 'hound' is symbolic of divine presence or love of God. In this poem, he describes in wonderful language how the urge for God haunts man in every walk of life from birth to death and beyond. Man falls a victim to the lure of the flesh and hears not the call of the Spirit; but the Spirit, the love of the Almighty, follows him day and night throughout his life, and ultimately leads him on to the realization of Godhead.

Vedānta holds that the world is not real; it is an appearance, not a reality. It appears to be real, but it is not the permanent all-abiding Absolute Reality. It is a fleeting show, an ephemeral entity, having phenomenal reality alone. Not only does Wordsworth embody this truth in some of his poems, but he also actually experienced this illusory nature of the world in his life in states of mystic trance that often visited him since his boyhood. In his introduction to the 'Immortality Ode', he records this experience in clear and unambiguous terms: 'I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from the abyss of idealism to the reality.' He calls the earth 'an unsubstantial fairy place' in his popular piece 'To the Cuckoo'. Vaughan, the devotional poet, foreshadows these metaphysical convictions of Wordsworth in his famous poems 'Retreat', 'Childhood', 'Eternity', etc. He calls the world 'a shadow, not substance', 'time, not Eternity', and describes human life on earth as only an arc of the complete circle preceded by the antenatal and followed by the post-mortem existence of the soul; and that complete circle represents the Universal Soul which has no beginning, no middle and no end. The statement that life on earth is only an arc of the circle, an expression or manifestation mid-way between two unmanifested and unknown phases is reminiscent of a *śloka* of the *Gītā*, wherein the Lord says:

'O Bhārata, beings are unmanifest in their origin, manifest in their middle, and again unmanifest in the state of dissolution. Hence there is no cause for lamentation' (II.28). The conception of the Absolute as a circle reminds me of the saying of my Master Sri Om Baba, 'When beginning is the end it is a circle', i.e. no more beginning, no more end. In the eulogy of *guru*, recited by a devout Hindu daily, God is described as '*akhaṇḍa-maṇḍalākāra*', i.e. an endless circle.

Long before Vaughan and Wordsworth, the great Shakespeare described the illusory character of phenomena in superb language through the mouth of Prospero in his famous comedy, *Tempest*, as follows:

The cloud-clapped towers, the gorgeous
palaces

The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this unsubstantial pageant fades,
Leaves not a rack behind—we are such stuff
As dreams are made of.

Crossing the bounds of Platonic idealism, these lines savour of the Vedāntic doctrine of Māyā or illusion. The great Victorian Tennyson, also, affirms this fact when he sings:

The hills are shadows and they flow
From form to form and nothing stands.
They melt like mist, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shape themselves and go.
(*In Memoriam*, cxii)

Everything vanishes, but the substance remains; the form passes away, the spirit abides. To establish this truth, in the very next line following the above stanza, Tennyson says: 'But in my spirit will I dwell'. The poet thinks that he will dwell in his spirit eternally, though his physical form may undergo transformation and crumble down.

In the excerpt from Wordsworth's introduction to 'Immortality Ode' cited above, the poet makes an important observation that external objects are not different from the mind; they are not 'apart from but inherent in' man's 'own immaterial nature'. This observation has the sanction of his personal mystic experience, and as such, carries conviction to the mind of the readers. His mystic realization proves that there is no fundamental difference between so-called mind and matter; in reality, both are the expressions of the supreme Spirit. The Absolute has assumed all these different names and forms. The *Upaniṣad* says: *'Rūpaṁ rūpaṁ pratirūpo babhūva.'* After creating the different objects, the Absolute permeates and pervades them through and through: *'Tat sṛṣṭvā tadevānuprāviśat'*. In the words of my Master Sri Om Baba: 'Just as waves, foams, bubbles, ripple, vapour, etc. of the infinite ocean are nothing but water in reality, likewise trees, earth, man, the sentient, the insentient, knowledge, nescience, the visible, the invisible—all objects, whether perceived or imaginary, are but the manifestations of that one infinite Being.' Blake strikes home this great truth when he sings in the following strain:

Man looks out in tree, herbs, fish, beast
Collecting up the scattered portions of his immortal body
Wherever grass grows or a leaf buds
The Eternal Man is heard, is felt.

He calls the supreme Spirit 'Eternal Man', i.e. Paramātman, whereas personal man is *jīvātman*. In heavenly strains does Wordsworth codify this truth in his 'Tintern Abbey' in inimitable words:

Whose dwelling is the light of the setting suns
And the round ocean and the living air
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking souls, all objects of all thoughts
And rolls through all things.

Shelley, also, lends support to this Vedāntic truth when he sings rapturously in his 'Adonais' about the Eternal Spirit:

The one spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world. ...
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's Light.

Thus these poets conceive the universe as the expression of pure thought wiping out the line of demarcation between mind and matter, the sentient and the insentient. From this ultimate standpoint, all created beings are charged with consciousness, existence, and bliss of the pure Spirit; hence nothing is mean or trivial. Every object is a manifestation and souvenir or the supreme Beloved. Hence Robert Bridges calls the world the 'Testament of Beauty' in his famous poem of the same caption. Hence it is that Vaughan, the great mystic, maintains that even the dust or dirt of this earth is not to be ignored, because it is instinct with the glow of divine warmth and reminds the seeker of God:

> And here in dust and dirt, O here
> The lilies of His love appear (*The Revival*).

According to Vedānta, this 'one Spirit' is eternal and unchanging; it remains one and immutable in the midst of all changes; it is the unity underlying the apparent diversity, the Eternal One in the midst of the fleeting many, the Concord in discord. Shelley utters this Vedāntic truth all unawares when he writes:

> The one remains, the many change and pass;
> Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly (*Adonais*).

Tennyson goes further and asserts:

> That Infinite
> Within us, as without, that All-in-all
> And above all, the never changing One
> And ever-changing many.

In these lines, Tennyson depicts the supreme Soul as simultaneously immanent and transcendent. It is, to use his words, 'within us, as without'; again, it is 'all-in-all' and 'above all'. The Upaniṣads describe Brahman, the Absolute Reality, as at once immanent and transcendent. It is the soul of the universe, soul of man, and transcends the limitations of time and space. Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, while commenting on the Upaniṣads in general, and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* in particular, repeatedly stresses this simultaneous immanence and transcendence of the supreme Spirit.

Tennyson is also right in his observation that the ever-changing many is not independent of the never-changing One. In fact, the never-changing One, the Eternal Spirit has assumed the diverse forms of the ever-changing many. He who realizes this truth perceives the One and not the many. This perception of one Reality and not diversity, this realization of concord in apparent discord is the bed-rock of mysticism. Such perception is termed mystic vision. The Lord states in the *Gītā*: 'Know thou that knowledge to be pure by which the one indestructible Being is perceived in all beings as unity in diversity.'

In the words of my Master: 'Realization of Brahman consists in establishing unity in diversity, in doing away with the many: visualizing One and not many.' This realization of One and not many, unity and not multiplicity is, in fact, self-realization, and this is the purport of the Vedāntic injunctions of '*Tattvamasi*' and '*Aham Brahmāsmi*'—'Thou art That' and 'I am Brahman.' 'I' in the highest sense is the supreme Soul; due to nescience it appears as an individual entity. In his book, *What is Life,* observes Schrodinger in the concluding chapter on 'Determinism and Freewill': 'I, in the widest sense of the word, that is to say, every conscious mind that has ever said or felt 'I' am the person, if any, who controls the motion of the atoms according to the laws of nature. Consciousness is a singular of which the plural is unknown.' This God-realization is really the realization of the Self by the self, in the self, and it strikes out duality as the personal 'I' is lost in the Eternal 'I'. The Upaniṣads hold that the knower, knowable, and knowledge,—seer, object of sight, and vision, all merge into one indivisible entity in the act of self-realization. In the language of the renowned philosopher Eckhart: 'God and I are one in the act of my perceiving Him.' Sings the Sufi poet of Persia, Faridud-din Attar, 'Pilgrim, pilgrimage, and road were but myself towards myself.'

The Vedāntic doctrine of the post-natal existence of the soul after it had run the race of life on earth and the absorption of the individual soul into the All-Soul finds expression in the writings of several English poets of whom Shelley and Tennyson stand out pre-eminently. In his '*Adonais*', Shelley describes the mutability of the body and immortality of the human soul which resolves back to its fountain, the supreme Soul while shuffling off the mortal coil:

> Dust to dust, but pure spirit shall flow

> Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
> A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
> Through time and change, unquenchably the same.

Freed from the trammels of the body, the individual soul loses itself in the All-Soul, he is no more a visible physical entity, but in the words of Shelley:

> He is a presence to be felt and known
> In darkness and in light, from herb and stone
> Spreading itself where'ver that Power may move
> Which has withdrawn his being to its own:
> Which wields the world with never-wearied love
> Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

Shelley, an ardent follower of Plato, surpasses Platonic idealism in the above two stanzas and unwittingly reproduces the Vedāntic doctrine of the transmigration of the Soul and metempsychosis. He describes the disembodied soul of Keats in these stanzas. But Shelley's statement does not clarify the point as to whether the individual soul completely loses its identity or individuality after expiry and whether a man should undergo successive births to attain final liberation termed *mukti, mokṣa, kaivalya,* etc. in our scriptures. Shelley does not point out the difference between death and emancipation or salvation. There must be some difference in the post-mortem state of a soul which is not liberated and that which has attained final liberation. The pertinent question of rebirth crops up in this regard and Christians, like Mohammedans, do not admit reincarnation. We do not know whether Shelley believed in the doctrine of rebirth. If he did not, it is hard to explain how a man can attain liberation in one single birth. There is reason to believe that Tennyson believed in reincarnation. In his famous elegy, '*In Memoriam*', on his deceased friend Hallam, he clearly states in unambiguous language that man has to undergo a cycle of births to attain final emancipation. The soul of a person who has not attained liberation retains its individuality though merged in the All-Soul when disembodied:

> That each, who seems a separate whole
> Should move his rounds, and fusing all
> The skirts of self again, should fall
> Remerging in the general Soul.

The line 'should move his rounds' refers to the series of births he undergoes till he attains his goal. Individuality lasts after death and the soul is not fully absorbed into the Godhead. After several births and deaths when man is spiritually fit for final liberation, his soul finally shakes off the body, the 'skirt of self', and is wholly absorbed in the All-Soul.

An awakened soul has to wait so long as his body persists to be absorbed into Godhead, his supreme Beloved. Hence he regards his body as a barrier, a veil that curtains him off from his God. Hence he, intolerant of the delay of union, prays for the annihilation of his physical existence. Down the ages, this prayer, this cry is heard amongst apostles, aspirers, *yogins*, and mystics. This cry is heard in the poems of devotional poets of England as well such as Vaughan, Donne, Grashaw, Herbert, Bishop King, and the like. Couched in beautiful language, Vaughan sends forth the passionate cry of his soul to his beloved Lord:

> This veil I say is all the cloak
> And cloud that shadows Thee from Me:
> This veil Thy full-eyed love denies,
> And only gleams and fractions spies
> O take it off, Make no delay
> But brush me with Thy light.

Only the rapt mystic, an apostle can send forth such a prayer which springs forth from the innermost recesses of his heart in the highest flight of devotion.

Instances of such unwitting acceptance and confirmation of various tenets of Vedānta by different English poets may be multiplied, but due to the prescribed limit of this article I must round it off here. The above discussion proves that the doctrines of Vedānta or Upaniṣads are eternal truths; this is why crossing the geographical bounds they reverberate in the hearts of saints and poets of the West as well and find expression in their writings. This fact also proves that truth is not the monopoly of any time or clime; it abides in all ages and all lands.

GURU-ŚIṢYA TRADITION

By Sri M. P. Pandit

The importance attached to the institution of the *guru* and *śiṣya,* guide and initiate, in the spiritual tradition of India—as indeed in most of the esoteric disciplines all over the world—may well provoke the sophisticated modern philosopher to ask, where is the necessity of accepting another as *guru?* Is not man endowed with sufficient intelligence to see what is good for him and what is not? Can he not choose his course of life, in whatever field, on his own? Surely, man has a mind and a will to determine and shape his own destiny. More than that. If it be true, as is declared in the scriptures and testified by so many in all ages, that in the heart of each one there is the Divine, the *antaryāmin,* who is the innate guide of each man, then, where is the need of a human *guru?* One has only to listen to the voice of this Leader within oneself instead of subjecting himself to the will and control of another man who is, after all, as fallible as any human being cannot but be. There are not a few instances of *yogins,* saints, and mystics who have had no *guru* save this Inner Guide, and by following Him, they have arrived at their destination. The indispensability of the *guru-śiṣya* system is nothing more than a superstition that is better discarded in this rational age of development.

It is certainly true that in each man there is the Divine stationed in the innermost recesses of the heart, He who is not only the Lord of his own existence, but who is, indeed, spread everywhere and rules the universe, the Jagad-Guru, World-Teacher. But the question is, how many can feel and realize that Presence? How many can open to and receive guidance from Him? Man, as he is, is severely limited in his vision and audition by the several folds of ignorance in which he is steeped, and he cannot normally reach very far, either upwards or inwards. Besides, the falsehood which is a product of ignorance is so much intermingled with the functionings of his senses that it is easy for him to mistake the voices of his own ego or desire-self to be the dictates of the Soul. Theoretically, indeed, it is possible to awake to the Inner Guide and go ahead in one's spiritual journey, as has been demonstrated by rare men now and then in the history of man. But, by and large, this truth is limited in its application by reason of the immaturity of the human mind in its present state of development.

Further, it is by the senses that man knows and believes, and the senses are turned outward, *bahirmukha.* They do not report on what they do not see or sense in a physical way, and hence it is difficult for man to believe in a guide who cannot be physically felt or seen. An unseen guide cannot normally claim his faith. To meet this natural difficulty, the Indian tradition recognizes the fact of the *avatāra,* the Divine descending into the world of man in a perceptible, physical form, the Incarnation, the Divine Man who claims the allegiance of progressive mankind. Incarnations are, however, rare;

they come once in a way, only at crucial stages in the evolution of the universe. But there are lesser manifestations of the Divine, emanations that come for specific work, the *vibhūtis*, the prophets, men of God. These are the God-appointed *gurus* of humanity to lead men Godward. But they, too, are not born every day, and they are not many who can draw upon their word of teaching as a sufficient guidance for successful practice. A past personality, a past teaching is still a power, no doubt, but it has its limitations in application to a present, far removed from the age in which the message was delivered, and in a future, it is still further remote.

It is to meet such an unfilled need for adequate guidance and lead in the inner life that ancient Indian tradition holds up the ideal of the human *guru*. This *guru* is a human being, living, who has already trodden the path chosen by the seeker and who is in a position to show him the way. Not only to show the way, but he has also the power to transmit the truth of his experience or realization to the disciple. In fact, it is he who makes the spiritual ideal living and dynamic for the novice, by initiating him into the knowledge of its truth with a simultaneous impulsion into the practice for its progressive embodiment in his life. Without such a *guru*, it is well-nigh impossible to go far on the path. The spiritual domain is still an unfrequented territory to the normal human mind, and if one is not to lose one's way in the vasts and deeps that abound in its infinite spread-out, one has to have recourse to a guide who has known the terrain and who is competent to lead. Says the seer in the *Ṛg-Veda*: 'The stranger asks the way of him who knows it; taught by him who knows, he travels onward. This is, indeed, the blessing of instruction; he finds the path that leads *directly* forward' (X.32.7). The Upaniṣads declare in one voice that only he who has a teacher can know, *ācāryavān puruṣo veda*.[1]

Brahman is the object of the supreme quest, and Brahman cannot be known by mental effort. 'Unless told of Him by another, thou canst not find thy way to Him; for He is subtler than subtlety and that which logic cannot reach. This wisdom is not to be had by reasoning; only when told thee by another, it brings real knowledge.'[2] Even study of Śruti, scripture, works of authority, cannot give the delivering knowledge. Only by knowledge received direct from the *guru* does one attain to the most beneficient.[3] It is only he, in whom that knowledge is alive, that can communicate to the seeker. The Upaniṣads record how even those who were teachers in their own right and were masters in their own fields of knowledge, had to go as disciples to other adepts when they sought to know the truth of other paths. Not that these seers could not grasp it intellectually by themselves. But there was something more that had to be imbibed, the *technique* to make that knowledge effective in themselves. 'We can give you the knowledge, even knowledge of the Ātman,' say the gods 'but only the Teacher can show you *the Way*.'[4]

If the Veda and the Upaniṣad testify to the advisability, even indispensability of the *guru*, and found a tradition of the *guru-śiṣya* axis,[5] it is the Tantra that has given a firm shape to the tradition and worked out in minute detail the dynamics of the *guru-śiṣya* operation.

In the tradition of the Tantra, the *guru* is the central pivot on which every movement in spiritual life turns. He is not just a learned man who can teach. It is profane to look upon him as human. He is much more; in fact, he is looked upon as a representative of the Divine, even the very Divine Himself. The supreme Śiva who is formless, says the seeker in *Kulārṇava-Tantra*, appears to the seeker in the form of the *guru*. The *guru* is great because the First Lord, Mahākāla, is manifest in him.[6]

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[1] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI.14.2[1].

[2] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, I.2.8-9.

[3] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, IV.4.3.

[4] *Ibid.*, IV.14.1.

[5] Of this axis, the master is the first form, the disciple the latter form, and their junction results in the *vidyā* (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, I.3.2).

The Tantras declare unambiguously that no man can walk the path unaided. One may have read books, practised austerities, acquired amazing proficiency in the use of his faculties. But book-learning remains a mental knowledge, ritual becomes a mechanical routine, unless they are energized by the personality of the *guru*. It is only those acts that are inspired by the *guru* that yield *bhakti* and *mukti*, *gurumukhyāḥ kriyāḥ sarvā bhaktimukti-phalapradāḥ*. One may be qualified; but he still needs someone to launch him on the journey, to implant that power in him which would keep him moving and lead him aright through the regions that are beyond the limits of human capacity to negotiate. And this help is provided by the *guru*. Whatever the nature of the *sādhanā*, whether it is the way of meditation (*dhyāna*), or ritualistic worship (*pūjā*), or *mantra-japa*, it is the *guru* who initiates, conducts, and leads to fruition. 'The form of the *guru* is the root of *dhyāna*, the lotus-feet of the *guru* is the root of *pūjā*, the word of the *guru* is the root of *mantra*, and the grace of the *guru* is the root of *siddhi*.'[7]

II

The *guru* is of two types: *śikṣā-guru*, one who expounds and teaches the Śāstra to the enquiring intelligence and equips the mind with an ordered knowledge, bearing on the meaning and goal of existence; *dīkṣā-guru*, he who initiates the seeker into the dynamics of the path that is to be followed to translate that knowledge in his own life. A more detailed classification is given in the *Kulārṇava-Tantra*, where the *gurus* are described as being of six different kinds: *preraka*, who creates an interest in *sādhanā*, the practical discipline, by drawing attention to its beneficent results; *sūcaka*, who opens the eye of the seeker to the vision of the *sādhanā* and its objective; *vācaka*, who explains the method and the goal; *darśaka*, who shows them in convincing detail; *śikṣaka*, who teaches step by step the discipline and details of the ritual; and *bodhaka*, who endows the aspirant with the necessary understanding of mind and illuminates his being with his own spiritual light. Of these six kinds, says the *Tantra*, the last, *bodhaka*, is, as it were, the prime cause of which the rest are the effects: without the lamp of knowledge lighted by the *bodhaka*, all other steps remain without consequence.

What are the qualifications that are demanded of a *guru*? The Tantra Śāstra is very exacting on this point. He must be 'endowed with all auspicious features, graced with full limbs, knower of all Āgamic lore, knower of the course of all *mantras*, endearing to all, charming like a god, of happy countenance, easy of access, remover of delusion and doubt; who can read by signs and gestures, knows the pros and cons, wise, brilliant, with attention fixed within, though the gaze is outward (*antar-lakṣyo bahir-dṛṣṭiḥ*), who knows the right time and right place, whose command is self-fulfilling, knows the past, present, and the future; capable of control as of release, knows to impinge subtly, to illumine; serene, benevolent to all creatures, controlled in the movement of the senses, and victorious over the six enemies; premier, solemn, with discrimination between the deserving and the non-deserving ... pure, ever-contented, potent with *mantra-śakti*, lover of devotees, bold, kind-hearted, with smile before speech ... content with what comes unasked ... identified with the one I in all, free from duality'.

In a more significant passage it declares: 'He is the *guru* whose vision is steady without object, mind steady without support, breath immobile without effort'; 'When he shows the Truth one becomes that Truth' (*Kulārṇava-Tantra*, XIII).

The *guru*, the *ācārya* is one who practises himself what he preaches, and establishes the disciple in that practice, *svayam ācarate, siṣyam ācāre sthāpayatyapi* (*Rudra Yāmala*). He is ever ready and eager to help and uplift those who come to him for aid. He is capable of assuming the burden of those who come under his care and ferries them across the ocean of existence like a hospitable boat. For the *guru* is, ultimately, the doer who works the *sādhanā, kartā,* saviour who protects from all dangers, *pātā,* annihilator who destroys all obstructions, *hartā;* he is the donor of liberation, *mokṣapradāyakaḥ.*

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[6] *Yoginī-Tantra*.

[7] *Kulārṇava-Tantra*, X.13.

Such an inordinate importance given to the *guru* and power attributed to him would be, indeed, un-understandable were we to fail to note that, to the seers of the Tantra, the *guru* is not just the human personality that bears the name. In truth, the real *guru* is not visible to the physical eye at all. He is there seated in the upper reaches of the head, in the thousand-petalled lotus, the *sahasrāra,* the Eternal Guru, the Lord who rules the whole domain. 'There is only one auspicious *guru* and he is certainly Myself. He is to be contemplated, at times, in the thousand-petalled lotus, at times, in the heart-lotus, and at other times, as present before the eye (in human form)' (*Rudra Yāmala*). It is this Guru that is concentrated upon and invoked by the human *guru,* first in himself, and then communicated in His power to the disciple. Asks the *Kulārṇava:* 'If Śiva himself is not the *guru,* then who is it that gives the bliss and the liberation?' Another Tantra describes the *guru* as the grandsire of the deity invoked: *Mantra* is born of the *guru, devatā* is born of the *mantra;* and so, the *guru* is the grandfather of the *devatā.*

Thus it is the Divine who is present and active in the person of the human *guru* that is transmitted and implanted in the being of the disciple. It is the Divine that initiates the career of the *sādhanā* and conducts it. The *guru* is only the channel, the representative of the Divine. The disciple is enjoined to keep this fact in mind and to have utter devotion to him as to the Divine, a firm faith in the *guru* as a front of the Divine, *yathā deve tathā gurau.*[8] It is this fact of the Divine behind the *guru* and the faith of the disciple in the *guru* as the Divine that are of cardinal importance. The human personality of the *guru* does not count so much as this faith of the *śiṣya* in the *guru.* For that faith connects him with the Divine through the *guru* and whatever be the failings or limitations of the *guru,* the devotion and faith of the disciple do not go barren. While on the subject, we are reminded of Sri Aurobindo's authentic remarks in this regard: 'It is not the human defects of the *guru* that can stand in the way when there is the psychic opening, confidence, and surrender. The *guru* is the channel or the representative or the manifestation of the Divine, according to the measure of his personality or his attainment; but whatever he is, it is to the Divine that one opens in opening to him; and if something is determined by the power of the channel, more is determined by the inherent and instrinsic attitude of the receiving consciousness, an element that comes out in the surface mind as simple trust or direct unconditional self-giving, and once that is there, the essential things can be gained even from one who seems to others than the disciple an inferior spiritual source, and the rest will grow up in the *sādhaka,* of itself, by the grace of the Divine, even if the human being in the *guru* cannot give it.'

Thus, to the disciple, the *guru* embodies the Divine, he holds in himself the full knowledge and the central truth of the path that is sought after by the seeker and is in a position to communicate to him something of his own power of consciousness perfected in the *sādhanā* of the path. This is the

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[8] Spiritual knowledge comes to luminous fruition only when given to the high-souled one who has supreme devotion to the Divine and to the *guru* as to the Divine (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad,* VI.23).

sādhanā-śakti that is alive with the *tapas* of the *guru*, and once it is entered into the being of the disciple, it commences his *sādhanā*, takes charge, and leads him onward. Before going into the process of this transmission of *śakti*, initiation as it is called, let us see what the Tantras have to say about the qualifications of the disciple.

The *Gautamīya Tantra* says that the disciple should be 'born in a noble family, of pure spirit, seeking the fourfold object of life, learned in the Vedas, wise, devoted to the service of the parents, a knower of *dharma* and doer thereof, attached to the personal service of the *guru*, proficient in Śāstra, strong of body and mind, ever desirous of doing good to others, a doer of acts which bear good fruit in the next world, devoted to the service of the *guru* in speech, mind, body, and with his wealth, mindful only of acts which bear enduring fruit, possessed of control over the senses, free from sloth, free from delusion and vanity'.

The *Śāradā Tilaka*, also, says that an aspirant should be 'of good family, pure of soul, set on reaching the supreme object of life, well versed in Vedic knowledge, skilful, free from desire, well-wisher of all, believer, devoted to the parents, and engaged in service to the *guru* in speech, mind, and body'.

Among the requirements laid down in the *Kulārṇava* are: faith, devotion, deep thought, discrimination, gratitude, zeal, freedom from poverty of mind or *mano-dāridrya-varjitam*.

In other words, a disciple must have an earnest seeking. He should have a keen awareness of the futility of leading the ordinary animal life, and somewhere in him must burn the flame of aspiration to a life in Truth, in God, a constant urge for liberation from the human bonds into the freedom of the Infinite. He must have a strong will to persist in the face of obstacles, a central sincerity to the ideal that is chosen, to the *guru* who is resorted to, and to the *sādhanā-śakti* that is involved and set active in himself. Once this sincerity is there in a sufficient measure, the rest is assured, whatever the shortcomings of the aspirant.

So equipped, the seeker approaches the teacher, the *guru*, 'fuel in hand', *samitpāṇi*, ready to catch the fire of Knowledge.

III

Thus approached in humility of mind and ardour of the soul, the *guru* receives the aspirant and puts him through a period of observation, during which he satisfies himself regarding the competence, the *adhikāra*, of the novice for the higher calling. He sees not merely the outer personality, but studies also the inner nature, the type of the soul, and the kind of development already undergone and the direction in which further growth is to be promoted, and also, whether there is the needed affinity of being between himself and the fresher. Once that is done, he decides on the nature of the discipline that is best suited to the aspirant and proceeds to instruct accordingly. Instruction, *upadeśa*, may enjoin the way of *karma*, works or ritual; or the way of *dharma*, faithful observance of the injunctions of the Śāstra, secular and religious; or the way of *jñāna*, illumination of the mind by the light of higher knowledge, knowledge of the real nature of oneself, the world and the Divine. In a picturesque imagery—which, however, need not be taken too literally—the first, *karma-mārga*, is compared to the course of the ant at the bottom of the tree starting out to reach the fruit at the top, the *dharma-mārga* to the progress of the monkey hopping from branch to branch on its way to the summit, and the *jñāna-mārga* is likened to the rapid movement of the bird which flies straight to its destination without any meandering or delay.

Whatever the path chosen and the discipline selected for the seeker, no real *sādhanā* begins till a relation is established between him and the *guru*. And this relation starts from the moment an inner connection is made between the two, as a result of something from the consciousness of the *guru* entering into the being of the disciple. This entry of the *guru* into the disciple is aptly described as the impact or descent of the higher Power, the conscious Power of the *guru* or of the very Divine through him, *śaktipāta*. Where this *śaktipāta* is not, says the Śāstra, there is no fulfilment.

The means of effecting this transmission of consciousness is called initiation, *dīkṣā*. *Dīkṣā* is what gives union with the Divine and sunders the knots that bind.[9]

Dīkṣā is either *bāhya*, external, effected through some outer means of interchange, *kriyā-dīkṣā*; or it is *ābhyantarī*, inner or subtly effected, the *vedha-dīkṣā*. It is called *vedha*, because like the hunter reaching his prey by sheer sound-direction, without even seeing his object, the *guru's śakti* strikes at the being of the disciple wherever he be, irrespective of any barrier or distance.

Initiation without any ritual or outer process is threefold: *spārśī*, based upon touch, which tends the disciple in the manner of a bird nourishing its young ones within the warm folds of its wings; *cākṣuṣī*, based upon sight, which acts like the fish that bring up their offspring by means of sight alone; *mānasī*, mental, which builds like the tortoise tending its infant by only thinking of it.

According to another classification, *dīkṣā* is of three kinds: *śāmbhavī*, *śāktī*, and *āṇavī*. *Śāktī* is that in which there is no ritual or physical contact for purposes of initiation. It takes place when the *guru*, by his Yogic power, enters his own *śakti* into the being of the disciple, directly. The disciple may not be even physically present before the *guru*. The *guru* thinks of him and sends an emanation of his consciousness to enter and take charge of that disciple. *Śāmbhavī* is the contact that takes place by the mere sight of the *guru*, by just a touch, by an exchange of words, and brings about something like a revolution in the consciousness of the disciple, precipitating the advent of a divine pervasion. The third is the *āṇavī* or *māntrī*, in which the *mantra* or a ritual, or any kind of perceptible means is used to forge the relations. This *āṇavī-dīkṣā* is further subdivided into ten different categories: *smārtī*, where the *guru* remembers the disciple who is in another place and acts, in order to release him from the three bonds into the state of bliss; *mānasī*, where he beholds the disciple in his company and exerts himself mentally for his release; *yaugī*, wherein the *guru*, following the course of *yoga*, enters into the body of the disciple and joins his being to his own; *cākṣuṣī*, wherein poised in identity with the consciousness of the Lord, the *guru* gazes in compassion at the disciple and destroys his sins; *spārśī*, where the *guru* becomes the supreme Lord, and as Śiva, touches the head of the disciple; *vācikī*, when the *mantra* is transmitted from the mouth of the *guru* to the disciple, along with *mudrā*, *nyāsa*, etc.; *māntrī*, where the *guru* assumes the body of the *mantra* and passes into the disciple, i.e. he energizes the *mantra* in his own consciousness and transmits the *mantra-śakti* to the consciousness of the disciple; *hautrī*, where *dīkṣā* is given through an elaborate ritual, *homa*, worship, etc.; *śāstrī*, where *dīkṣā* is given to the fit disciple in terms of the Śāstra (Veda); *ābhiṣecikī*, where Śiva and his consort are invoked in the sacred jars (*kumbha*), and *dīkṣā* is given through this *abhiṣeka* of the *śiva-kumbha*.

Whatever the nature of the *dīkṣā*, it is essential that there should be the *śaktipāta*. The *guru* enters into the being of the disciple, takes him up in this vaster consciousness, and—to use the significant symbolism of the Veda—keeps him in his womb for the significant period of three days (Mark the three nights spent by Naciketas at the abode of Yama, before he was eligible for the secret knowledge of death) and then delivers him new-born. When the disciple is thus reborn into the second birth, the *dvija*, the very gods, says the *Atharva-Veda*, hasten to greet the new comer.[10]

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[9] *Dīyate śivasāyujyam kṣīyate pāśabandhanam* (*Paramānanda-Tantra*); *Pāśa*, bonds, are of three kinds: *sahaja* (natural), those with which one is born; *āgantuka*, those that come about by accident; *sāmsargika*, those that are forged by associations (*Prayogasāra*).

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[10] *Ācārya upanayamāno brahmacāriṇaṁ kṛṇute garbhamantaḥ, taṁ rātrīn tisrā udare bibharti taṁ jātam draṣṭum abhisaṁyanti devāḥ* (*Atharva-Veda*, II.5.3).

THE IMPORTANCE OF TAPASYĀ IN THE RĀMĀYANA

By Sri K. E. Parthasarathy

The Upaniṣads, whose sole purpose is to bring us nearest to the unseeable, unthinkable, transcendental Brahman, form part of the *āraṇyakas* or forest books. They could be conveniently recited, heard, and expounded in forests. Holy persons, keenly desirous of *vairāgya* (dispassion) and *nivṛtti* (renunciation) and of immersing themselves in the knowledge and meditation of Brahman, resort to forests as suitable retreats. It is seen from Āraṇyakāṇḍa and other *kāṇḍas* in Valmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa* that Rāma felt exceedingly happy in the company of *ṛṣis* who are described by Vālmīki as seers of Brahman and immersed in *brahma-niṣṭha*. Temperamentally, also, Rāma preferred the life of a *tapasvin* (ascetic) with all its austerity and simplicity to the life of pomp and luxury in the capital of his kingdom.

The *Skanda-Purāṇa* says: 'When the supreme Puruṣa, who can be known only through the Veda, was born as the son of Daśaratha, the Veda took the form of the *Rāmāyaṇa*.' The *Rāmāyaṇa* may be considered as 'Rāma-brahma-jijñāsā-śāstra' or the scripture that deals with an inquiry into Rāma-Brahman. *Tapas*, *svādhyāya*, and *pravacana*—austerity, scriptural study, and teaching—are well-known spiritual practices enjoined for an inquiry into Brahman. The opening *śloka* of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, with the words '*tapas*' and '*svādhyāya*', is suggestive of the importance attributed to these aspects of *sādhanā* in that great epic.

The Śruti enjoins the aspirant after divine wisdom to learn it through the teacher, and it directs the latter to impart it only to him who seeks it with his heart and soul. Lord Kṛṣṇa has, also, pointed out in the *Gītā* that knowledge of Brahman should be obtained through reverence, inquiry, and service (IV. 34). Both Nārada and Vālmīki were great *tapasvins*. In accordance with the traditional practice, Vālmīki put questions to Nārada in the manner of the student's questions in the opening verse of the *Kena Upaniṣad.* The three attributes to Nārada in the opening *śloka* of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, viz. 'devoted to austerity and scriptural study', 'best among those eloquent', 'eminent among those given to meditation', are suggestive of *śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana*—study, reflection, and introspection—which are important requisites for the realization of Brahman. Further, Brahman could be properly understood and realized in the light of knowledge imparted by *tapasvins*.

The term *tapasvin* means a person distressed in mind, and therefore, an object of compassion. Dispassion for worldly things and avidity for *Brahma-jñāna* are essential conditions for approaching a Brahman-seer or *guru*. Nārada described himself as one distressed when he approached his *guru*, Sanatkumāra: 'I am full of sorrow on account of my unsatisfied thirst for Brahman-realization. My Lord, let me be helped to cross the sorrowful ocean of *saṁsāra*.' The name of

Vālmīki is itself indicative of his unparalleled *tapas*. The attribute '*tapasvin*' suggests the *śoka* and *vairāgya*—sorrow and dispassion—in the mind of Vālmīki and thirst for the knowledge of Brahman.

The word *tapas* is indicative of austerities practised by *ṛṣis* and others in the epic. The poet compiled the epic sitting as a *tapasvin* on *darbha* grass. When Rāma was in the forest, Bharata did *tapas* by thinking of Rāma alone and yearning for his return. Lakṣmaṇa did *tapas* when he had no *kaiṅkarya* (service) to do to Rāma and Sītā. Mārīca did *tapas* by thinking of Rāma and seeing him almost in every tree out of his fear for Rāma. Sītā did intense *tapas* under the *áśoka*-tree in Laṅkā. Even though she was surrounded by the cruel *rākṣasīs,* she was seeing Rāma and Rāma alone through her mind's eye. She could not see anything except Rāma. Rāma was ever in her mind, before her eyes, and everywhere. Hanumat did *tapas* for the achievement of success in his mission as Rāma's messenger. Vibhīṣaṇa did *tapas* from the time he came to the sea-shore until he was admitted to the presence of Rāma after prolonged discussions. The people of Ayodhyā did *tapas* ever since Rāma left the city until his return. At the end of the Yuddhakāṇḍa, Vālmīki has charmingly described that, after the arrival of Rāma, the entire kingdom became *Rāmamaya* or full of Rāma, and everyone became Rāma.

Rāma has been described as a *maharṣi* with the radiance like that of a great sage. In fact, he liked to be called a *ṛṣi*. He himself told Kaikeyī that he be looked upon as equal to a *ṛṣi*. He was happy at the opportunity afforded to him to enjoy forest life by Kaikeyī who insisted upon obtaining her two boons. As Bhavabhūti has observed, he took up his *āraṇyaka-vrata* in his young and tender age, unlike the old Ikṣvāku kings who observed it only in the evening of their lives.

It is worthy of note that Manu has influenced Vālmīki a good deal. References have been made to Manu in Bālakāṇḍa and Araṇyakāṇḍa. In his Dharma-Śāstra, Manu has stressed the importance of *tapas* as the sure means of attaining divine life. The sages have seen the entirety of creation only by its power. It leads to divine knowledge. It leads to *mokṣa* or liberation. Whatever is difficult of attainment can be easily and readily achieved by means of *tapas*. It alone enabled the Creator to create and the sages to obtain the vision of the scriptures. The fire of *tapas* destroys all sins. These aspects are well illustrated in the several episodes dealt with in the epic.

There are several other sages mentioned in the *Rāmāyaṇa* who are well known for their intense austerity, Vedic study, and Upaniṣadic meditation. They had transformed their life into one of spiritual discipline. Their bodies shone with their inner radiance and glory. They were high-souled, sinless, and free from all likes and dislikes. They were noted for being men of steadfast *yoga,* perfect mental equipoise, and concentration in meditation. On account of their austerity and righteousness, they had developed great yogic powers and nature was a slave in their hands.

The *ṛṣis* in the Daṇḍaka forest have been shown as pursuing their search for Truth through meditation on the lines taught in the Upaniṣads. They had visualized in their minds Rāma, about whose incarnation they had already heard of and whom they knew to be Parabrahman, now come in human form. It has been said that the habitation of the Brahma-*ṛṣis* in the Daṇḍaka forest was like a Brahma-loka without Brahman. The void was filled up by Rāma who was no other than Parabrahman, coming in their midst. The main purpose of the incarnation was to afford protection (*paritrāṇam*) to the *sādhus*. The protection must be not only to the bodies, but also to the souls. It was but fitting on the part of Rāma to have spent the best part of his life in the company of the *ṛṣis*. Sītā was also so much attracted by the forest life in the company of the *ṛṣis* that she herself expressed her desire to Rāma to go to the forest a second time. The *ṛṣis*, in turn, were blessed with the contact and enjoyment of Rāma-Brahman.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* contains instructions to look on disease and death as *tapasyā*: 'This, indeed, is excellent austerity that a man suffers when he is ill. ... This, indeed, is excellent *tapasyā* that a man after death is carried to the forest. ... This, indeed, is excellent *tapasyā* that a man after death is placed on fire.' This was exactly the attitude of the *ṛṣis* in the Daṇḍaka forest towards their body. The mortal frame was considered a hindrance in the attainment of Brahman. Notable examples are Śarabhaṅga Ṛṣi and Śabarī. Śarabhaṅga threw himself into the flames of the fire lit before Rāma, delightfully enjoying Rāma-Brahman as his body was consumed by fire. This is what was done by Śabarī, the jungle woman, engaged in remembrance of Rāma, expecting his arrival every minute. Both Śarabhaṅga and Śabarī had the highest Brāhmic enjoyment and eventually attained salvation.

The *ṛṣis* have been described by Vālmīki as *agnikalpas*. This suggests that their *tapas* had the power to destroy the demons and other evil elements, like a forest fire burning the trees. The *ṛṣis* themselves could have made short work of the demons with the fire of their *tapas*, but they could not do so as it was incompatible with their vow of *ahiṁsā*. Help of Rāma was, therefore, sought.

Sītā, the great *tapasvinī*, felt that with the fire of her purity, she could reduce Rāvaṇa to ashes, but she did not want to do so in the absence of a command from Rāma, because such an act like this would lessen Rāma's glory. Mandodarī had, of course, expressed that Rāvaṇa's glory had been burnt by the fire of Sītā's chastity. Similarly, Hanumat considered that Laṅkā was burnt by Sītā's glory.

India derived its greatness and glory more from its sages and *tapodhanas* than from others. It was from the *āśramas* and *tapovanas* that the stream of spiritual life flowed into the life of the cities and villages. The *ṛṣis* associated themselves very closely with the welfare and happiness of the country. Their co-operation and guidance were sought for solving the thorny problems of the day. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, we find sage Vaśiṣṭha as Daśaratha's prime minister and spiritual guide. It is stated that he acted as the prime minister of the Ikṣvāku kings for twenty-seven generations. He was called a *brahmavādin*—a teacher of Brahman. The spiritual truths taught by him to Rāma are embodied in Vālmīki's *Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha*; and what a mine of good counsel and spiritual knowledge that book is! He was throughout the guide, philosopher, and friend of Rāma and looked after the administration of the kingdom, especially during the latter's absence, with great acumen and wisdom. It was only at his instance that Rāma placed his feet on the sandals and handed them over to Bharata for ruling the kingdom in his absence.

Viśvāmitra, Bharadvāja, Agastya, and many such sages play important roles in the epic either as advising Rāma and others in the performance of their different duties or offering assistance and guidance to the people around them. The existence of the *ṛṣis* was thus a cause of auspiciousness, as also a source of strength to all from all points of view.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* begins with the word '*tapas*' and ends with the word '*pravardhatām*'. Both the words put together finely suggest the keynote of the epic, viz. 'May *tapas* increase more and more'. Sri C. Rajagopalachari, in the preface to his *Rāmāyaṇa*, has aptly remarked: 'The real need of the hour is recommunion between us and the sages of our land, so that the future may be built on rock and not on sand.' This is the great need of the hour and it is fervently hoped that our land, which has the glory of giving to the humanity at large the inspiring message of renunciation and '*tapas*, as contained in the immortal epic of Sage Vālmīki, will awaken to the importance and reality of this need.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Swami Nirvanananda is one of the senior Trustees of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. He served Sri Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) as his personal attendant between 1917 and 1922. His memories, which have been taken in parts from the *Vedanta and the West* (March-April 1960 issue), give some very intimate pictures of Sri Maharaj, which will be found interesting and elevating by our readers, specially in this year, the hundredth after his birth. ...

Swami Atmaghanananda of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, has sent us for publication a letter of Mrs. S. K. Blodgett, who has also been introduced by him in the beginning of his article. We have no doubt that the article will be found very interesting, inasmuch as it brings forth a very homely side of Swamiji in America. ...

'Ajātaśatru's Instructions to Bālāki', by Sri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer, M.A., formerly Professor of Philosophy, Annamalai University, Madras State, is based on the episode in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad,* dealing with the conversation between Ajātaśatru and Bālāki. It is a fine treatise on the principles of Advaita Vedānta, explained in convincing terms by an adept in the philosophy of Advaita to one who had inadequate knowledge of the relationship between the seer and the seen. ...

Principal Jogiraj Basu, M.A. (Triple), (Retd.) of Dibrugarh, Assam, is one of our old contributors. In his article, 'Echoes of Vedānta in the Poetry of England', he shows briefly how many of the great English poets, though unwittingly, have, in their works, given expression to some of the salient thoughts of Vedānta, which contains the eternal principle of truth behind all life in the manifested universe of our experience. ...

Sri M. P. Pandit, of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, deals with the various aspects of the preceptor and disciple relationship in his article on 'Guru-śiṣya Tradition'. His article, which is informative and scholarly, will also be found illuminating and helpful in showing the relationship that should obtain between a spiritual guide and the aspirant. ...

Tapasyā or austerity of body, speech, and mind has been spoken of in our scriptures as a great aid to a life of true happiness and spiritual attainment. Sri K. E. Parthasarathy, B.A., of Madras, in his article, shows from the Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa* the importance given to *tapasyā* and to the sages who practised it; he says that the need of its cultivation is as necessary today as it was then for a good life—individual or national.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN INDIA. By Dr. Surama Das Gupta. *Published by Orient Longmans Ltd., 17 Chittaranjan Avenue, Calcutta-13. 1961. Pages 226+index. Price Rs. 25.*

Indian ethical thought has so far been ignored by students of Indian philosophy. If at all it was taken up, there was a prejudiced angle from which this thought was surveyed. Some Occidental scholars have praised parts of it for its similarity with their religious ideas or condemned it for its dissimilarity. In such a context, it is heartening to come across Dr. Surama Das Gupta's work.

Action and knowledge have been the two principles that determined ethical thinking from the Vedic times onwards. After outlining these basic principles, Dr. Das Gupta proceeds to give an account of the ethical ideas found in the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the Smṛtis and the *Gītā*. Then we come to have the ethical thinking according to the different systems of philosophy. This part of the book is more valuable since it gives a philosophical framework to ethical ideas. Greater attention is paid to the Buddhist thought and this is allowable when we consider the mass of available literature on the subject. She ought to have paid an equally greater attention to the Śānti and Anuśāsanika *parvas* of the *Mahābhārata* where we have the richest ethical thought and systematization. Equally at fault is her attempt to minimize the nature and role of *karma* and rebirth. This is not to minimize the value of an otherwise good dissertation which seeks to establish the freedom of the self as the goal of Indian ethical thought.

Dr. P. S. Sastri

THE SOMA-HYMNS OF THE ṚG-VEDA. A Fresh Interpretation—Part III. By Dr. S. S. Bhawe. *Published by the Oriental Institute, Post Box 75, Baroda, Gujerat. 1962. Pages 228. Price Rs. 7.20.*

Utilizing the Pāṇinian rules of exegesis, Dr. S. S. Bhawe presents in this volume the interpretation and translation of the Soma hymns, IX. 51-70 of the *Ṛg. Veda*. Yet the author agrees that the results of the Pāṇinian method can be modified in the light of comparative evidence. The modification may, at times, involve radically altering the application of Pāṇinian principles. Thus, in IX. 53. 1., we find *parispṛdaḥ* taken to mean 'strong combatants' and rendered as 'strengths'. Such difficulties apart, Dr. Bhawe presents a valuable work. The notes accompanying the rendering are really valuable. A wide acquaintance with the great work of eminent scholars, a rich scholarship, and penetrating exposition make the volume a *must* for every student of the *Ṛg-Veda*. If only the Sanskrit commentary of Pandit M. V. Upadhyaya were made available for the entire text, the worth of the volume would have been very high.

Dr. P. S. Sastri

THE SPIRITUAL HERITAGE OF INDIA. By Swami Prabhavananda. *Published by George Allen and Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House, 40 Museum Street, London-WC. 1. 1962. Pages 374. Price 35 shillings.*

Books on Indian philosophy and religion are not new to the West. Still various books on these subjects are being published there from time to time, proving thereby the sustained interest of the Western seekers of Truth in Indian philosophy and religion. Therefore, the present volume on Indian spiritual heritage by Swami Prabhavananda, of the Ramakrishna Order, will, no doubt, receive a warm welcome.

In India, religion and philosophy have always been interdependent. This does not mean that philosophy in India does not follow the rational method thoroughly. It has for its goal the ascertaining of ultimate truths, first through reasoning, and then, through direct intuitive experience. To fulfil this latter part—direct experience—is the role of religion. The greatest philosophers of India have also been its greatest spiritual men. Therefore, the book under review makes a brief but interesting survey of Indian religious literature and history, as well as of great philosophers right from the Vedic times to Sri Ramakrishna, the prophet of modern India.

One significant feature of the book is to supply 'sufficient quotation from the texts concerned as incidental illustration, and sometimes, also as appended passages to give body and force to the exposition'. Thus the volume can act as a compendium of India's religious books, besides being a brief history of Indian philosophy.

The earlier chapters on the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the *Bhagavad-Gītā Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, and the *Bhagavad-Gītā* make a comprehensive review of these ancient religious books in a lucid and simple style that will kindle the interest of the reader to go through the original texts. It is needless to say that these books form the essence of India's spiritual heritage. Therefore, the first five chapters of the book bring to the reader the cream of these holy books within a short compass of 132 pages. Chapter VI briefly discusses the Smṛtis, Purāṇas, and the Tantras. Chapters VII to XIV give an exposition of the heterodox and orthodox systems of Indian philosophy, relating them wherever possible to modern thought. Chapters XV to XXIII briefly set forth the ideas of the greatest exponents of Vedānta—both dualistic and monistic. The last chapter brilliantly tells the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna.

Thus the book, after presenting within a brief space the vast array of Indian thought, summarizes the fundamental ideas of India's religion in four cryptic sentences in the Epitome: 'God is; He can be realized; to realize Him is the supreme goal of human existence; He can be realized in many ways.' And the book rightly sums up India's spiritual efforts in the words: 'To bring together against rampant evil the great religions of the world is no doubt a gigantic task, but it is one for which India has the special qualification that she strives for unity, not by calling for a common doctrine, but only by pointing to a common goal, and by exhorting men to its attainment. The path, she assures us, matters little; it is the goal that is supreme.'

Throughout the book, the author emphasizes the one theme of India's religion and philosophy, namely, transcendental experience of religious truths. And this, the author explains, can be on all the three planes—dualistic, qualified monistic, and monistic. The book will be valuable both in India and abroad as a comprehensive and authentic guide to Indian thought and religion.

A useful bibliography and index at the end enhance the value of this excellently produced book.

S. S.

PUSHPANJALI. By H. R. Akkepeddy. *Published by the Author, C/o Burma-Shell Depot, Bhimavaram, Andhra Pradesh. Pages 103. Price Re. 1.*

The book under review is a collection of 108 devotional poems composed by the author on different occasions and in different moods. Generally, the poems show the religious thinking of the author and are his own prayers to the Divine. Some of the poems are very good and touch one's heart as one goes through them. The sincerity and effort of the author are commendable and praiseworthy.

S. C.

GOD OUR CONTEMPORARY. By J. B. Phillips. *Published by Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., London. 1960. Pages 191. Price 8sh. 6d.*

It is a general demand that religion should recognize intellect as an adult with its right to question. Consequently, the need for presenting religion rationally so as to convince the questioning intellect is being increasingly felt by preachers of all religions. But the trouble starts when the intellect in its sweep ignorantly hopes to exhaust religion as an ant thinks about a sugar hill; and religion, on the other hand, with its age-old authority snubs the intellect as a nursery teacher does with her noisy kids. The solution lies in both intellect and religion trying to play their legitimate roles, conscious of their inescapable limitations.

Though paradoxical it may sound, the correct exercising of reason and intellect in regard to religion, with humility and sincerity, should serve as a builder and not an exploder of faith. Also, rational presentation of religious concepts backed by shining living examples should only inspire and not irritate the intellect to the validity of truth. Thus the widening gulf between reason and scepticism on the one hand and faith and truth on the other can be minimized.

Modern man feels God his contemporary only when he is convinced that the God of the ancient scriptures is available even at his own time and is more than adequate for his needs here and hereafter. Only a *contemporary religion* can help man to this conviction, and it is the job of the clergy to make religion contemporary. The attempt of the author is to call the attention of both the sceptic and the believer to these points, and he has succeeded to a large extent in doing so, as far as Christianity is concerned.

In Chapter VIII of the book, while referring to religions other than Christianity, the author takes pains to show their differences and inadequacy both in themselves and as compared to Christianity, and through this he tries to prove the futility of eclecticism. To believe that an amalgam of fundamental concepts of the major religions will find universal acceptance as a faith suited to the whole of humanity is to ignore the existence of various levels of intellectual developments and the consequent varieties of spiritual approaches and traditions. The incompatibility of such a belief with intelligent reasoning based on the history of religions is too patent to be refuted. If the author had refrained from ill informed observations about other religions, his call to a rational approach would have been stronger.

The book will be found useful to all those who care to recover intelligent faith in Christianity.

Swami Pranananda

A CRITICAL STUDY OF GANDHIAN ECONOMIC THOUGHT. By S. N. Jha. *Published by Lakshmi Narayan Agarwal, Educational Publishers, Agra. Pages 276. Price Rs. 12.*

Any thesis about Mahatma Gandhi is rather difficult to evaluate. A clear and critical appraisal is rendered almost impossible because of the all too towering height of the person which dazzles us into a blind acceptance of every utterance of his, regardless of their scientific value. Even casual observations pass for a gospel truth. An attitude of worship is as much detrimental to an objective assessment as disrespectful levity and one has to steer clear of both the extremes in order to make a scientific evaluation of the economic musings of the Mahatma.

A thesis which purports to be critical must expose things to searching questions. The author has constructed a pretty little hold-all in which he has collected the fundamental thoughts of the great soul, which ramify into numerous directions, covering a comprehensive compass spread over economics, political science, sociology, theology, and above all, an idealism of the highest order which aims at establishing a 'non-violent Rām-rāj', whatever the connotation of the phrase may tend to be in accordance with the predilections of the reader. Herein you find a remedy for every conceivable disease, including the one which originates in the grinding poverty of the masses which ought to be the central theme of the thesis propounded by the author.

Given the fact of acute poverty, how can we escape the question when and how the Gandhian techniques of production are going to lead the masses to the much-coveted-for day of deliverance from destitution, let alone the Utopian possibility of a visible rise in their standard of living. The primitive plough and the age-old spindle have belied the hopes of men right from the days of Buddha whose sensitive soul could not stand the sight of the miserable plight of the masses. Increase in productivity is a 'must' if at all we attach any value to human existence and there is no possibility at all of any significant increase in the productivity of labour, unless labour is well equipped with refined tools. Why is it that the author does not ask himself the question as to how long we can carry on with our antiquated low-yielding techniques of production? What is the fun of repeatedly muttering that we are copying the Western modes of production, when we know it for certain that the alternative to Westernized techniques is stark poverty?

A 'critical study' cannot go on arguing in terms of a presumption of the very results to be achieved. Nothing could be more unreal than the Gandhian attitude to population. Adoration of the impossible has been the bane of India throughout the ages—self-control is no solution at all to the population problem of India. Reliance on self-control as a means to check the rapid growth of population is bound to intensify resistance to development in view of the almost certain failure of self-control and the resultant unchecked growth of population. By far the biggest hurdle to development in India is the enormous annual accretions to her population and with all our respect for the Mahatma, we should be constrained to observe that his attitude has been a dismal failure. Why should the author have drawn blinders to the facts of life, especially when he claims to be critical?

In the face of rank diabolism of the propertied classes as is evidenced by the ever-increasing rents, rates of interest, and profit, mercilessly exploiting the weaker sections of the society, how on earth can one regard the owner of property as a trustee for the welfare of the community? In order to induce a capitalist to donate a few thousands for a charitable cause, you have to allow him to make a few millions, and even then, you are never certain about the charity of the multi-millionnaires, save to escape income-tax. There would be nothing left in the world to achieve if man could effectively eradicate his own tiny self to merge completely with the interests of the society. We have to remember the saying of Lenin that this animal (the capitalist) is too naughty. The hoax of trusteeship can hardly deceive the masses in view of their own experience of the economic world as it functions under capitalism.

One fails to understand as to how one could advocate village self-sufficiency and a return to barter when it is pretty certain that progress entails increasing integration of the rural sector of the economy with that of the industrialized urban sector on the basis of a mutual give and take that is conducive to the development of both the segments. Agricultural development depends on the availability of water, better tools and implements, fertilizers, transportation facilities, scientific knowledge, etc., most of which require a good deal of assistance of the urban sector, and similarly, food for the urban population, raw materials for industries, supply of labour to the industrial establishments, etc. must come from the rural areas. What is required is increasing integration, and not self-sufficiency, in the interest of national progress.

All this does not mean that there is no point on which one could agree. Gandhian emphasis on a fuller utilization of man-power, restraint of consumption, decentralization of industry with a view to avoid unhealthy congestion in the urban areas, his emphasis on the village and cottage industries are certainly being given a due weightage with the necessary modifications in the interest of better productivity.

A comparison of Gandhi with the great economists of the world which the author attempts in the last chapter is hardly warranted. One can always show certain similarities of thought as between different thinkers. The impression that the author leaves is that the attitude of blind worship has done a considerable damage to what could otherwise have been a really critical appraisal.

H. G. Kulkarni

SĀDHANĀ IN AUROBINDO'S YOGA. By M. P. Pandit. *Published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry, South India. 1962. Pages 100. Price Rs. 5.*

Whatever may be one's reactions to the metaphysics of Sri Aurobindo, it is undeniable that Sri Aurobindo was a great *sādhaka*, a *yogin*. The systems of philosophy give us a theoretical knowledge only. The practical side of all systems involves a kind of *yoga*. Sri Aurobindo's *yoga* was directed towards the evolution of a new consciousness, of a diviner human life. It seeks to overcome ignorance, incapacity, and death by knowledge, power, and immortality. It can be defined as a human urge for self-perfection.

Sri M. P. Pandit offers in a brief compass a succinct account of the *sādhanā* of a *yogin* and of the nature of this *sādhanā* in Sri Aurobindo's *yoga*. Without any pedantry he takes us to the essentials embodied in *śāstra, utsāha, guru,* and *kalā*. The object of this integral *yoga* is to transform the normal limited human consciousness into a higher, diviner consciousness which, in its turn, can transform nature into supernature. Though we may not agree with the facile transformation of the Gāyatrī *mantra*, yet Sri Aurobindo's ideal is worth realizing. And Sri Pandit has really done a good service in offering this outline.

Dr. P. S. Sastri

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, MANGALORE

Report for the year 1961-62

During the year under review, the activities of this centre were as follows:

Boys' Home: This institution provides free board, lodging, stationery, clothing, etc. to poor and meritorious students, irrespective of caste or creed. At the end of the year, there were 42 students in all, 10 belonging to higher elementary school, 21 in high school, and 11 in college. Of these, 38 were free, one concession holder, and 3 paying.

An important feature of the Home is that the boys are allowed to manage themselves the affairs of the Home, gaining thereby the spirit of self-reliance and co-operation and creative personal effort. They are also taught to chant the scriptures and *stotras*, and a weekly discourse is conducted for them by one of the Swamis.

The Charitable Dispensary: Number of patients treated: New cases: 8,026; repeated cases: 20,941; total: 37,967 (injection therapy: 2,047; dental extractions: 116; laboratory investigations: 399).

Needs of the Centre:

1. Endowment for the maintenance of poor students: Rs. 360 per boy, per annum.
2. A dormitory: Rs. 30,000.
3. Bedding and clothing for boys.
4. A permanent endowment procuring a monthly income of at least Rs. 500 for the maintenance of the dispensary.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SOCIETY RANGOON

Report for the year 1961

The following were the activities of the Society, during the year under review:

Free Library: More than 3,500 books were acquired during the year. The number of books at the end of the year was 34,150 in seven languages, namely, English, Sanskrit, Burmese, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, and Gujarati. The number of books issued was 40,014.

Free Reading Room: There were twenty-eight dailies and 125 periodicals in the reading room. Average attendance: 375.

Scripture Classes: Classes were held on the *Bhagavad-Gītā* on three days in a week, and on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* once a week. The teachings of some saints were also discussed. Total number of classes held: 255. Average attendance: 30.

Burmese Language Class: A Burmese language class was conducted, thrice a week, by an experienced teacher.

Cultural Study Group: Several discussions were held on educational, cultural, and religious subjects amongst small groups of people.

Celebrations: Social functions or public meetings were held to celebrate the birthdays of prophets of diverse faiths and festivals of different religions.

Public Lectures, Symposia, etc. In all, forty public lectures were organized on cultural and religious subjects, besides cultural film shows and musical soirees.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVIII AUGUST 1963 No. 8

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Allahabad Math, January 21, 1933

A monastic disciple was sitting in front of Swami Vijnanananda. The Swami told him: 'The Master was the living embodiment of purity. Contemplation of him or taking his name makes you free from all evil thoughts. The mind goes up on a higher plane, the Kuṇḍalinī (coiled up vital force) is roused. Whenever the mind becomes pure and holy by being detached from material things, it reflects the luminous image of God. For a man who has got that realization, the world ceases to exist. We fail to see God because our mind cannot go beyond the confines of the world and its objects.

'When I gazed upon the image of Buddha in the museum at Sarnath, I had a supernatural experience; then I felt I had got dissolved in that bright sea of light.

'The world is like the day. When this worldly day dissolves into night, you should meditate on God. The Lord says in the *Gītā*: "The *yogins* keep awake at a time which for worldly people is night, and sleep when other people are awake." That is to say, the real God-consciousness is dark as night to worldly people, but for the *yogin* who has controlled his senses, it is bright as day. And love for material things, which looks like the bright day to worldly people, is to the *yogin* a nocturnal sphere of eternal darkness.

'Swami Trigunatita had come to the Master. His father asked him, "Who is your father?" Swami Trigunatita answered: "My father is the *ākāśa* (space)." And to his father's question, "Who is your mother?", he replied: "My mother is *prāṇa* (life force)."

'See how strange it all is! The Master used to say: "You should meditate in the mind, in secluded corners, and in the forest." Keshab Sen used to say that preaching should be done in market places, fields, and at bathing places on the rivers (i.e. wherever people assemble).

'Brahman is like a motionless snake. Śakti is like a snake in motion, and that is the Kuṇḍalinī. When this spiritual energy moves upwards, the mind also gets elevated; and when it moves downwards, it draws the mind down to a state of darkness and ignorance.

'I find that, in women, this upward trend of energy is more evident. That is because they are a part of the divine Śakti. But ordinary people cannot look upon women in that way and that is why they entertain impure thoughts towards them. The mere sight of women, in the case of the Master, would activate the Kuṇḍalinī; his spirituality would gain precedence over all other feelings, all sense urges and passions became docile like worms before it. If you want to control your passions, you have to meditate constantly on the Master and the Holy Mother, and all degrading thoughts will at once cease to trouble you.

'Śakti worship is very difficult. Our monks can do it only because they have the blessings on them of the Master and the Holy Mother. Otherwise, it is very difficult to please Śakti.'

Then Maharaj began to speak about Lord Śiva: 'When I was in Varanasi in connection with the construction of the Sevashrama buildings, the Lord Viśvanātha revealed Himself to me and I embraced Him. He had a serene, smiling countenance; His body was soft and had an icy coldness. The chant "*agar vyom*" means that, in the beginning there was the *vyoma* or space and Lord Mahādeva resided in it and thus he came to be called the "*agradevatā*", the foremost deity.'

Allahabad Math, February 6, 1933

Before some monks and devotees who had assembled at the Math, Vijnan Maharaj said: 'I had a beautiful dream some three or four days' back. I saw that I had walked up to a temple of Śiva. There I found the Master standing at the entrance with a basket of flowers and other offerings. I was wondering whether he would recognize me after such a long time. I, of course, knew him at once. When I came near, he said: "How is it that you are here?" He touched my head with his hand and blessed me, and immediately I awoke. Then I thought within myself: "Why shouldn't the Master recognize me? He knows the past, the present, and the future, and transcends time and space. He surely remembers the created beings—even animals, worms, insects, and all.

'While in his physical frame, the Master would go from Dakshineshwar to the Śiva temple at Bally on the *nīlāṣṭamī* day to worship the Deity with sacred water. Once, after performing worship, he fell into an ecstatic mood, his face illumined with a bright smile, and pointing towards the Deity, he told Hriday: "Look, Śiva is moving; He is smiling. Look, the flower is falling." And immediately the flower fell from the head of Śiva. Such was the Master. Once in the temple of the Goddess Kālī at Dakshineshwar, he said: "Mother, if you are really the Mother of the universe, this piece of cotton that I hold before your nose will move with the breath of your nostrils." And immediately the piece of cotton moved. Scientists, of course, would not believe all this easily.

'I was then about 17 or 18, a student in college. I went one day to the Master and asked him: "Has God a form or is He formless?" And his reply was: "God is both—and at the same time transcends both." By "form" I meant all things with form, and asked him: "If God possesses a form, is this bedstead also God?" He then said with emphasis: "Yes, it is also God; and these utensils are God, this wall is God, everything is God."* I felt like one entranced, my inner being bright with a divine illumination. I listened to him spellbound. After a while, I said again: "If God is in everything, why this discrimination at the time of taking meals against touching this and that person?" The Master said: "Look here, a prostitute used to come here and eat the leavings out of the leaf-plates left by the *sādhus* after they had partaken of the *prasāda*. She had no restrictions about food; but do you then mean to say that she had therefore the supreme knowledge?" I said: "No, sir, she was a woman of bad character." "So you say that wisdom does not depend on food only," said he, "it needs some other thing besides." I sat there out of my wits; and that great personality of his also used to fill me with awe. He could do anything he liked; he had all powers within him.'

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* On a Kālī Pūjā day in Patna, in connection with the Master's seeing God in every created being, Maharaj said: 'The great devotee Prahlāda also had this insight. To Hiraṇyakaśipu's question whether God was inside the crystal pillar, he replied in the affirmative. As soon as the pillar was broken, God appeared in the shape of Nṛsiṁha (man-lion). He killed Hiraṇyakaśipu and took Prahlāda in His sheltering arms.

A devotee: 'But, sir, his photograph does not reveal his great personality. That you find rather in Swamiji's (Swami Vivekananda's) photographs.'

Maharaj: 'No, no, you are wrong there. The Master's was an extraordinary and rare personality.. His is a picture of transcendence of all the six *cakras*. On looking at his picture which is suffused with a divine radiance you feel as if he is immersed in an ocean of joy, after transcending those *cakras*. I see many things in that picture, and therefore, I talk about them. But Swamiji, Rakhal Maharaj, and others did not use to reveal anything. Once, at Belur Math, we were sitting on the upper verandah, facing the Gaṅgā, and discussing these and similar things, when Sarat Maharaj (Swami Saradananda) happened to pass by and asked me: "What is all this you are talking about?" I became silent. Later on, when I read his *Līlāprasaṅga* (the biography of the Master), I discovered how much more sublime and esoteric things he had written about the Master. Then I thought: "I am what I am—he has outpaced me."

'The Master's was a unique personality. I say this because I have seen him. A wave of spiritual power constantly played over his entire body. Among ordinary human beings, some have a little play of power in their brains, and they become great physicists, chemists, or statesmen. But, in the case of our Master, the current of this power flowed through every part of his body. And what an infinite reservoir of power he was! He could move about at will in the spheres among the sun and the moon and the stars—a marvellous man, indeed!

'Once the Master showed me his portrait saying: "I am in this; you should meditate on it." I agreed to do so. In this picture of the Master, you will find everything. You will find it out; gradually the Master himself will show you. He will help those who take refuge in him.'

Allahabad Math, February 9, 1933

Many monks and devotees had gathered in the afternoon. One devotee asked about the life beyond. Vijnan Maharaj explained it elaborately, and then went on to say: 'With everybody there is consciousness. This consciousness pervades the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the sky, the air, etc.—down to the minutest being, and it is because of this consciousness that there is motion in everything.

'Our Master had knowledge of the past, present, and future. Therefore he said that Rāma and Kṛṣṇa of the past had now come as Ramakrishna. He also said that he would be coming again. He conferred on Swamiji the boon of death at will. "Naren will give up his body whenever he wills it", said he.'

A monk had brought from Varanasi a rosary of *rudrākṣa* (beads of a special type). On seeing it, Maharaj said: 'Śiva is in meditation on Mount Kailas and each tear of joy that falls from His eyes becomes a bead of *rudrākṣa*. There is spiritual power in it and telling these beads fills one with spiritual joy. The *Śivaliṅga* is found in the Narmadā, and the *Śālagrāma* in the Gaṇḍakī river.'

Then, on being asked the reason for writing the name of Mother Durgā on a bael-leaf on the Vijaya day (Dassera), he said: 'There are three bael-leaves on one stem, signifying Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva, or creation, preservation, and destruction. That is the trinity; and the entire twig represents God as the Mother of the universe. That is why you have to write on it the name of Durgā with vermillion.'

Allahabad Math, March 9, 1933

A certain devotee's mother had been to see God Paśupatinātha in Nepal and, in accordance with Vijnan Maharaj's directions, had brought a rosary and a picture of Lord Paśupatinātha. The devotee had brought that rosary for getting it sanctified. Taking it up, Maharaj said: 'I usually sanctify rosaries by uttering the name of the Master and the Holy Mother while turning them.'

Telling the beads of the rosary thrice over with the Master's name uttered upon it, and again thrice with the Holy Mother's name, he gave it to the devotee saying: 'This will do. If you utter the names of the Master and the Holy Mother, that will include Swamiji, Rakhal Maharaj, and others. When I utter the name of the Master I say: "*Jaya* (victory to) Ramakrishna." Navagopal Ghosh of Ramakrishnapur used to utter "*Jaya* Ramakrishna" with great emphasis. And he did it with great ardour which always appealed to me. It made the heart move. And his wife, too, was all given up to the Master.

'And when I utter the name of the Mother, I say: "Mā Ānandamayī" (the Mother who is the embodiment of pure joy). The Mother's name has a special virtue: it saves you from women and all vulgar thoughts about them. I have felt this very strongly. Her name confers reverence, faith, devotion, wisdom, wealth, and everything else. In the book of *Caṇḍī*, you find She can give you wisdom and deliverance. The Mother's name gives me greater strength than that of the Master. Once, on a certain occasion, Swamiji was staying in Balaram Babu's house and the Holy Mother was also there. All the people were going up to make obeisance to her while I continued to sit by the side of Swamiji. He told me that I should also go and do likewise. I went up and, kneeling down before the Holy Mother, touched the ground with my head. I had not noticed that Swamiji, too, had followed me up behind. Seeing me bowing down like that, he said: "Is it the way to do *praṇāma* (obeisance) to the Mother?" Saying this, he completely prostrated himself before the Mother, at which I also did the same. The Mother is very near and dear to me and the heart is always submissive to her.'

After sitting lost in thought for some time, Maharaj told the devotee: 'When you are free from worldly distractions at night, you should be alone and do *japa* and meditate on the Master and the Holy Mother. After that, keep the rosary hung up high so that no one else may handle it.'

Devotee: 'Is there any fixed time for telling the beads?'

Maharaj: 'No. You can do it at any time, whenever you like, even when you are taking a stroll. But doing it at night and in undisturbed seclusion will give you a feeling of spiritual joy sooner.

'Staying at Belur Math even for three or four days and earnest meditation there in seclusion will give one wonderful experience. Many of the monks have had visions and trances there. But, of course, the climate there is not very good. Mahapurush Maharaj is so careful about his health, but he suffers from bad health for about five months in the year, from the end of June till early November. He is now full of devotion, full of love. He always prays for the good of all.

'I went on a certain occasion from Belur Math to Kalighat to see the Goddess. The monk accompanying me carefully took me inside the temple where I had a good view of the Goddess and touched Her. When I was going round Her, She was good enough to reveal Herself to me. The Kuṇḍalinī surged upwards and illumined the Sahasrāra (the brain centre).'

Allahabad Math, December 23, 1934

Swami Vijnananandaji had been working on an English translation of Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa*; some portions of Bālakāṇḍa and

Ayodhyākāṇḍa were already in press. At the very beginning of the book he had given a picture of Sītā-Rāma and the brothers, and Hanumān, and had tried his best to make the book attractive in all respects. These days he was engrossed in thoughts of Sītā and Rāma, and this was the topic he was now discussing with the assembled devotees.

'A few days ago, I was lying on the bed outside when I suddenly remembered the Master. He had said one day: "Where is my bow and arrow?" So I thought of including the portraits of the Master and the Holy Mother in the *Rāmāyaṇa,* and had a block prepared. But the block became somewhat anglicized in character (laughing) with the Mother sitting first and the Master sitting to her left. So what could I do if such was the will of the Mother? And she sat first! The Master very affectionately told me once: "For fourteen years, I had no food and sleep!" Lakṣmaṇa had no food and sleep for fourteen years. But Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa were one and the same—both incarnations of the same Viṣṇu. The Master said to Swamiji: "He who was once Rāma and Kṛṣṇa is now Ramakrishna." You have, of course, read that in books. But in an ecstatic mood, he told me very lovingly: "I was in the forest for fourteen years."'

In speaking of the Master, Maharaj was overwhelmed with feeling and, being unable to say anything further, sat quietly, deep in his own thoughts.

MORALS AND RELIGION

[EDITORIAL]

We have before us on the table a book, *Morals and Religion,** by Fred S. Elder. The book, in about 200 pages, tries to show that morality is absolutely independent of any religious obsession or God-idea. It is one of the many efforts, specially by the pragmatists and scientific humanists, to bring about the 'liberation of morals from super-naturalism and otherwise unscientific associations'.

The effort is not new. In our country also, there have been thinkers and philosophers who have tried to get rid of God and to establish Godless religions based on pure ethics. Some even have tried to do away with religion and give credence only to ethical laws as the sole basis for human life and structure of human society. In the West, the last century saw many eminent philosophers who thought that God was an unnecessary factor for a real good life. Herbert Spencer, in his *Data for Ethics* (1879) said: 'Now that moral injunctions are losing authority given by their supposed sacred origin, the secularization of morals is being imperative.' Kant, too, developed his theory of 'categorical imperative' when he said: (1) 'So act that the maxim of thy will may at all times serve as a universal law'; (2) 'So act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end, withal, and never as a means only'. But he believed in the existence of that 'universal monitor'—conscience—which ultimately led him to be convinced of the necessity of God, who had endowed mankind with this awe-inspiring attribute. Later on, findings and theories of scientific philosophers like Darwin and Huxley supplied enough food and material for the pragmatists and scientific humanists who have built up quite a strong and apparently rational philosophy of their own, and have a large number of adherents to their philosophy. Mr. Fred Elder, speaking about 'a non-super-natural, human, evolutionary theory of the origin and nature of man's moral senses', says: 'A purely natural morality does exist, all independent of divine guidance—forced into being by the fact that, without it, livable human social relations (and with them man himself) could not have come into being. All matters as to morals, all problems as to rightness and wrongness of men's acts in their mutual dealings, are covered by the science of ethics on a purely humanistic basis. Ethics has no concern whatever with any supposed relations of man, with any hypothetical God, heaven, or hell. ... God, heaven, or hell no longer enter into the picture of the educated man's ethical problems.'

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* Published by Philosophical Library Inc., New York-16, 1963.

II

God or moral life always means a disciplined life, when one has to conform to some restrictions and observe some rules. Good conduct always means an amount of self-control. Practice of morals presupposes some labour, some effort, some struggle, some sacrifice of the pleasures of flesh, and some denial of the natural cravings of animal life. Now, what can be the motive in a man to undergo all these restrictions and denials, if it is for nothing at all? Swami Vivekananda questions the basis for this utilitarian demand for ethics without religion. He says: 'The utilitarian wants us to give up the struggle after the Infinite, the reaching-out for the Supersensuous, as impracticable and absurd, and in the same breath, asks us to take up ethics, and do good to society. Why should we do good? Doing good is a secondary consideration. We must have an ideal. Ethics itself is not the end, but the means to the end. If the end is not there, why should we be ethical? Why should I do good to other men, and not injure them? If happiness is the goal of mankind, why should I not make myself happy, and others unhappy?' Man does not ordinarily want to move even his little finger, if he can help it, without a purpose, conscious or unconscious. Will a man, then, pursue virtue only for virtue's sake? Each living being, man not excepted, is concerned about his own 'good', and it is this idea of his 'good' that moves and guides him throughout his whole being on earth. This idea of goodness differs between animal and animal, between animal and man, and between man and man.

What, now, is the basis for the concept of goodness? We find in very low type of animals an idea, though not conscious, of natural goodness. Self-preservation is the motive force that guides them to take recourse to this kind of goodness. They will go in search of good food, good water, good shelter, and so on. 'Natural selection' of Darwin is a very cogent philosophy for this category of animal life. Going to higher animals, we find the idea of social goodness, where the consciousness moves in a wider circle, and goodness becomes an instrument and matter of convenience for the community. Practice of this goodness needs higher understanding and wider feeling of affinity. Living in herds, protecting each other, fighting against the common enemy are some traits of this kind of good life. But these two types of morality allow for adjustments and adaptations. They, therefore, change with needs and circumstances. We, therefore, find that moral concepts based on social or personal considerations differ among different people and in different countries. What is immoral to one group of people need not be so with others, and what passes for moral conduct with some may be a taboo with others. These moral concepts have no absolute value therefore. They are only relative in nature.

But there is also a higher type of goodness and morality above these two, with an absolute value, and this we may call spiritual goodness. And it is for man only to take benefit of this goodness and make for his real destination in life. Drop this idea of spiritual goodness from man, and there is hardly any dividing line between human beings and other animals. Professor G. R. Malkani says:

'It is in this purely religious sense that morality becomes the differentiating characteristic of man and divides man from the mere animal. Man has duties (*dharma*), the animal has none. Mere intelligence is not the dividing line.'

Consciously or unconsciously, the moral standard of a man is assessed from this point of view. Spiritual value is the main content of human ethics. It is for this reason that the moral life of man does not consist in taking good and healthy food or living in well-ventilated houses or keeping the body fit and healthy for a long time. Nor does it consist in 'simply paying one's bills, obeying traffic regulations, returning borrowed umbrellas, or anything else that can be indifferently performed in one kind of world, as well as in another', as a distinguished writer puts it. Generally, the common people praise a man as living a good life, if he is a law-abiding citizen, if he observes the common codes of social conduct, if he is non-injurious to others round about him, and if he does not become a cause of annoyance or any kind of inconvenience to his neighbours. We may call this goodness as negative goodness. Higher than this is that goodness where man shows a bit of courage by way of facing risks in any one of the good acts he performs, and sacrifices something of his own for the good of others. Such people are good social men, as they make charities, help other people, take some amount of trouble for the convenience of others, and so on. But, while they do so, they take care that they are not material sufferers in any way due to these acts of goodness. For example, there are rich people who are charitable by nature and give donations to philanthropic institutions, build rest houses for pilgrims, make gifts to temples, open food houses, etc. But they take care at the same time that, even after doing so, they have a sizable reserve for their own comfort and material welfare. They are looked upon as good people, but their sacrifice and goodness go only up to a limit and no further. This limit, of course, differs from man to man, and wider the limit, better is the man considered.

But the best man from the ethical point of view is he who is reckless in his sacrifices, whose personal consideration of loss or gain is nil, who towers above the reach of happiness and misery, encouragement and disappointment, fame or dishonour. Highest ethics is that which helps a man to kill his little self completely and find enjoyment in the higher Self. As Swami Vivekananda says, ethics is that system of living where one attains freedom through unselfishness, through goodness. He writes: 'Ethics always says, "Not I, but thou". Its motto is, "Not self, but non-self". The vain ideas of individualism to which man clings when he is trying to find that Infinite Power or that Infinite Pleasure through the senses, have to be given up, say the laws of ethics. You have to put yourself last, and others before you. The senses say, "myself first". Ethics says, "I must hold myself last". Thus all codes of ethics are based upon this renunciation, destruction, not construction, of the individual on the material plane.' This supreme spirit of sacrifice and complete negation of selfishness are what make the true content of the highest form of ethics.

III

But let us ask ourselves sincerely whether this great achievement—this annihilation of the ego-sense and attainment of the courage for supreme sacrifice—is possible without a faith in something which is above all these—which has a deeper existence—which has values higher than we ordinarily calculate upon? We may call it by any name, but it must be there as the lodestar to guide the sailor on to his destination—safe, eternal, not subject to change—by gaining which all gains fade into nothingness and all fears cease for all times. We call it God. We believe that a really good life is not possible without God. The poet-saint Tulsidas says: 'The moon may shed light on earth with full splendour, all the stars may come to shine on the sky, and the entire chains of mountain, with their vast forests, may be set on fire, but can the night change into day without the rays of the sun ?' Similarly, a man may show indication of this or that quality, may perform this good work or that, but to have that fire of renunciation, that complete unselfishness, that absolute goodness, he must have a deep faith in that highest Existence which we call God; nay, to be perfect, he must live, move, and have his being in God.

And what is God ? Well, it is not only difficult, but also impossible to define God. He is beyond all description, all definition, even beyond all conception. Still He is there as the 'sum total of this universe'. Philosophically, He is the essence behind this entire created universe, 'from whom all beings are projected, in whom all live, and unto whom they all return'. Practically, as Swami Vivekananda has said: 'The highest ideal of every man is called God. Ignorant or wise, saint or sinner, man or woman, educated or uneducated, cultivated or uncultivated, to every human being, the highest ideal of beauty, of sublimity, and of power, gives the complete conception of the loving and lovable God. These ideals exist, in some shape or other, in every mind naturally; they form a part and parcel of all our minds. All the active manifestations of human nature are struggles of those ideals to become realized in practical life.' This struggle to realize the highest ideal forms the core of religion, and ethics is the theory and practice of those qualities of character which give strength to man to carry on this struggle, and sustain him in his onward march to the destination. Why should a man take any trouble at all of cultivating good conduct if it is for nothing, if his existence on earth is as ephemeral as that of material objects subject to destruction ? If man is no more than a nervous speck of star dust, an outcome of fortuitous atomic adjustment, a pure mechanism without any deeper meaning behind, why should he, at all, cultivate these high qualities which he has to do at the cost of his creature comforts and material loss ? Want of belief in God or religion—we mean religion in its broadest sense—reduces human life into a calculation of profit and loss, into an adjustment of mere conveniences and inconveniences and robs it of the hearty love and sacrifice, joy of denials and disciplines, strength of character and conviction, and above all, of that infinitely projected outlook on life which transcends all human conceptions, leading one to a state of pure bliss. If human life is a mere cosmic dance of electrons, what interest can a set of electrons have for another ? If life activities are a few mechanical movements, what value have all those things which we admire as human qualities ? If one pursues one's thought in this way to where it leads, one lands in contradiction and meaninglessness, wherefrom there is no way out. Whatever, therefore, might be the opinion to the contrary, man is essentially religious, consciously or unconsciously. We use the word religion, we again say, in the sense that it recognizes man as a spiritual personality as opposed to an automaton. A man feels that he is greater than the world, that he is not mere matter like the objects he sees around him, and by his very nature, tries to discover his real Self, which the Vedānta calls as the potential Divinity of each soul. And thus all his actions—political, economic, and social—are steps towards this discovery, ethics being the most helpful part of his conduct leading him forward in this process.

IV

How is it, then, it may be pertinently asked, that many good qualities and high traits of moral character are found in persons who do not acknowledge any faith in God, and how is it that they are found wanting in men who profess to believe in God and be religious ? We shall say that the former class of people are unknowingly religious and the latter are not, though they think they are so. Though some modern Western philosophers as Professor Ewing say, "There is no valid formal way of deducing the "good" or the "aught" from the "is"', 'aught' is really based on 'is'. What man *aught* to do depends on what man 'is'. The *Gītā* says that 'man consists of his *śraddhā*; he verily is what his *śraddhā* is'. A man cannot act in a way which is not his nature. Religiousity or agnosticism, therefore, does not depend on what one says, but on how one acts. 'Aught' in a man reflects his value-sense and that is the true indication of the development of his mind and culture. Mere professions and appearances are, oftener than not, deceptive.

All our ideas of ethics, morality, and good conduct, therefore, are based on an unconscious belief that we are essentially spiritual units. All our acts of charity, unselfish love, truthfulness, and sacrifice have really a deeper meaning than mere humanism. We may recognize it or not, all are going to God, just as the streams scattered over the earth ultimately run to the ocean. By disowning this spiritual truth, we are making a futile effort to resist the current that is carrying us perforce to the Great Ocean, which is the ultimate goal of all our endeavours. On the other hand, a conscious recognition of this great fact would have given us greater facility, greater ease, to reach the Goal with much less friction and struggle. It would have much reduced the drabness and anomaly of life and filled us with a rare sweetness, enabling us to look at the world as the created beauty of God, and on all men as His children. The necessity of law to make good citizens of us would have been much reduced, if we could only acquaint ourselves with the divine law that connects all souls like a thread that runs through the different flowers to make a beautiful garland of them all. We would have found it hard to break the rhythm, if we only knew that through everything in the universe comes out the divine music and that it is to lead us to a state of Bliss where all our struggles and fights, cravings and possessions, tumults and conflicts find their eternal repose. This can be achieved only through the freedom of the Self from the bondage of passions and desires; and to achieve this is the essence of all moral thought.

'Satyam vada' (Speak the truth), *'Dharmam cara'* (Walk the way of piety), etc. are, therefore, not moral precepts based merely on humanistic or utilitarian considerations. The Vedānta recognizes the development of ethical virtues as the first step towards the preparation for realization of this great truth. If a man cultivates ethical virtues and tries to become what we call 'moral', but does not show any indication of his thirst for God, we shall say he is only preparing himself to do so. A man living a good life and trying to better it is only walking on the path of 'religion' and simply waiting for the time when the light of God would burst upon him, and he would feel that all his movements and actions—mental, physical, and spiritual—were to bring him face to face with that great Truth which is of the nature of *satyam-jñānam-anantam*—Truth, Knowledge, and Immortality. To face It is to know It, and to know It is to become one with It. This 'being' and 'becoming' is the end of all *true* ethics—the philosophy of human morals.

THE PHENOMENALISTIC PRINCIPLE

By Dr. P. S. Sastri

The subject and the object are opposed to one another like light and darkness. One refuses to admit in itself the nature of the other. When two entities cannot be at the same place or stage during the same moment, they are said to be opposed to one another; when the nature of one is incompatible with that of the other, then too, they are said to be in mutual opposition. Then the opposition between light and darkness is based on their respective natures. How can the subject be then related to the object?

Even if they are distinct, still it is possible that distincts can be misapprehended due to some similarity. Thus nacre appears as silver. The ground of such an appearance is the 'this', which may be nacre, but which is cognized as silver. The erroneous appearance is that of a content which does not belong to the *this*. The *this* and the *what* may be said to have a relation which seems to subsist between a generic and a specific nature, or between a qualified and its qualification, or between a whole and a part. None of these relations is possible with regard to the subject. Since the subject is pure consciousness, it cannot have any part of the object in itself. The object being an unconscious entity, if the self were to admit it, this unconscious element should be a natural or an acquired feature of consciousness. It cannot be a natural feature of a pure consciousness, if only because the subject of an act cannot become the object of the same act. But if it were an acquired feature, is this caused or not? The unconscious element cannot be a product, because the impartite consciousness cannot evolve itself into an entity made up of parts. Being a supra-rational entity, consciousness cannot admit any causal operation. We do not apprehend any evolution of an impartite entity like space.

The not-self cannot be the ground, because it is not conscious. If the object is a conscious entity, it would be the same as the subject, thereby ceasing to be an object. One percipient, for instance, cannot have any immediate apprehension of another percipient, but can only infer the other. Moreover, the object cannot evolve itself into the form of consciousness, since an unconscious entity can be the cause of only an unconscious effect. The not-self cannot also accept consciousness as its own part, since the consciousness constitutive of a subject cannot move like this. Moreover, the qualities of one entity cannot appear in another, since a quality cannot give up its ground and float in the air. The subject is represented by the notion of 'I' and is of the nature of consciousness which is the not-this. It is therefore impossible for a confusion of the subject with the object, or of the object with the subject, as the basis of any relation.

Should the subject and the object appear as related, we have the first appearance which is self-contradictory. The ego, the mind, the body, and the sense-organs are apprehended as almost identical with consciousness; and yet since they are *directly* revealed and apprehended by consciousness, they are not on a par with other objects. Still they are the objects for a consciousness. The properties of such objects may not actually be transferred to the subject, and yet the subject can be, at times, apprehended as having those qualities. Thus we do treat an individual as deaf, even though deafness is a property of the auditory system only. Moreover, the subject has certain recognizable features. The subject, viewed as consciousness, is eternal, in the sense that it is not controlled by the time-series. Its nature is experience; and it is always undefiled by any pain or sorrow. These features are not separable from consciousness, and yet they can appear as qualities which can be distinctly other than consciousness. They are, in fact, attributed to the mind or to the ego.

This attribution presupposes some similarity between the two entities. They cannot be similar in their entirety because the object is not consciousness. There can be no similarity between the parts, because consciousness is not a whole of parts. And when we speak of consciousness as an agent or doer, we admit that this is due to the ego which is mistakenly equated with consciousness. But how can I attribute deafness, a property of bodily organ, to the subject in the absence of any such equation? I know that A has a certain smell, and that B has a smell similar to that of A. When I smell B and when A is absent, the argument from analogy would tell me that I am smelling only B. Likewise, when I cognize a flower as yellow, I try to find out a cause for this colour and all the while I assume the reality of such a cause. In a like manner, when there is the cognition of the effect of an unconditioned appearance, I assume that this is due to something similar to it. In other words, any such transference involves the apprehension of a form where that form is not. This is technically called appearance (*mithyā*) which may mean either that which conceals something or that which is inexplicable. In reality, there is no such appearance; and yet the appearance is natural.

When we admit that consciousness alone is absolute reality, anything said to be natural must be that which is closely related to consciousness. But a relation is an impossibility with regard to absolute reality. And yet we are aware of an individual only in a context of relations. Thus, in order to experience, the self must be a doer since one who is not a doer cannot experience the consequences of an action; and to be a doer, the self must be attached to desire and hatred. Thus one relation leads inevitably to the other in a continuous succession. It is a continuity similar to that between the seed and the plant, and as such, it is to be treated as natural. Whenever we treat the self as a member of a relational context, we have the contradiction which is an appearance. It is manifest in such apprehensions as 'I am this', 'this is mine'; in all these cases, the 'I' is not the pure self. It is that form of the subject which is conditioned by the not-I. This conditioning is to be attributed a principle which may, for the sake of convenience, be designated as the phenomenalistic principle.

A simple appearance of one entity as having the nature of another does not necessarily involve any contradiction. Thus a white cloth presents a cloth as having a colour which is other than the cloth. A contradiction emerges when the real and the non-real are together presented as a single datum. When the not-this is integrated with the this, we have an appearance. This is the primary or basic appearance on which everything else is grounded. It can be analysed into not-this, this, belonging to not-this. That is, appearance or phenomenalism is a principle involving a relational context of at least two mutually exclusive entities. Here we have the *this* and the *not-this* and the two are presumed to enter into a relation of *belonging to*.

This apprehension of something as another is the result of the operation of appearance and non-knowledge. Appearance is a principle that brings forth the inexplicable, while non-knowledge is of the nature of non-consciousness. The activity of these two makes out that the apprehended appearance is neither simple absence of knowledge nor a mere erroneous cognition. The non-knowledge is a positive existent and it is the material cause of the entire apprehension of the world. Similarly, between entities, defects of the sense-organs, desire, hatred, and the like are only the conditions, not the causes, that contribute to our apprehension of self-contradictory data as real. If the conditions were to be treated as causes, we will have to enquire about that which has caused them. Such an enquiry will have to take us to the original cause of all appearance. The material cause of an appearance must partake of the nature of its effect at least to some extent; and this cause can be one which may be described as something that does not give us true knowledge of reality. For the sake of convenience, we may designate it as non-knowledge.

The self cannot be the material cause of appearances, because it is beyond change. An unchanging and impartite entity can neither initiate nor undergo changes. Can the mind be the cause of these appearances? The mind as internal can cognize external objects only with the aid of the external sense-organs. But in erroneous apprehension of silver, the eye does not come into contact with silver. It perceives only the nacre. We have to say that the mind alone cognizes silver. But this is impossible, because the blind man does not have any such cognition. If the mind can cognize unaided by the sense-organs, why should it cognize only the existence of the given? It can as well cognize what the given is. In other words, the mind by itself is not conscious of anything, and it cannot then know anything. If the mind can apprehend appearances, it can as well apprehend truth. We have reason to reject the latter alternative. If all apprehension refers only to the mind, the self will be an unwanted fiction.

Since the self or mind cannot constitute the material cause of an appearance, we have to accept a phenomenalistic principle, a principle that makes appearances possible. The principle cannot be equated with conditions like defective sense-organs which vary from individual to individual even though the appearances constituting the external world are the same for all. Moreover, the defective sense-organs are real in a way in which an appearance apprehended erroneously is not real.

The principle that we seek must be as much an appearance as the object apprehended; and the apprehension of such an object is equally an appearance. But since apprehension or experience is a feature of the self, this appearance must be ultimately grounded in the self. The non-knowledge that brings about the apprehension is grounded in the self; and its character is found in the object as well. The emergence of an appearance is natural in the sense that it has an unbroken continuity. It has neither a beginning nor an end; and yet is conditioned by non-knowledge. The phenomenalistic principle must then have its ground in consciousness, and it must be presumed to be beginningless. Such a principle can be subjective only, in the sense that the individual does not locate his consciousness outside himself. But it is a principle operating wheresoever we have centres of experience.

Consider the statements: 'I am ignorant', 'I do not know myself, nor others'. The first makes the self the ground of ignorance. Both the sentences express a direct, an immediate apprehension of ignorance. This ignorance is treated as other than the self and as a positive existent. Just as the statement 'I am happy' expresses my immediate awareness of a positive content, so does the expression 'I am ignorant'. This is not possible if ignorance is a simple absence or negation of knowledge. A statement like 'there is no knowledge in me' cannot record an apprehension of the pure ground. If it were to record such a thing, it ought to be synonymous with statements like 'there is no quality in me', 'there is no number in me'. These are plainly not synonymous expressions. I cognize the ground and something else. This is a determinate apprehension. If this ignorance is merely a negation of knowledge, it cannot have its ground in the self; for the self, being of the nature of knowledge, cannot coexist with the negation of knowledge. It can coexist only with a positive entity. This ignorance then is a form of knowledge revealed by self-consciousness (*sākṣi-caitanya*), and in its turn, it reveals an appearance.

Here it may be argued that an object gives rise to some knowledge, and that knowledge being the contradictory of ignorance, the object must be able to dispel our ignorance about it. The existence and validity of an object is determined by a valid means of cognition. If this is correct, how is the object made manifest by self-consciousness? Does self-consciousness reveal ignorance as qualified by the object, or pure ignorance? It cannot be the former since an object is apprehended only through the operation of some valid means of cognition. It cannot be the latter since pure ignorance is beyond apprehension.

This argument does not take into consideration the real nature of self-consciousness. The object referred to here is not an object of mere self-consciousness, but one of a specific self-consciousness. Any object is an object of self-consciousness either as known or unknown. As known it is that, apprehended through valid means of cognition. As unknown it is apprehended in a general or a specific way, and this merely denotes that the ignorance pertaining to that object is removed. While the former needs the operation of some valid means of cognition, the other does not need any such. At the moment we know something, we are also getting rid of the ignorance about it. In either way, we have an immediate apprehension of ignorance.

Inferentially, too, we can argue that ignorance is as much positive as knowledge. An object that is in a dark room is not visible, and it is not therefore apprehended. The first rays of light coming from the candle reveal it. This object is distinct from the darkness that is dispelled by the rays of light. The ignorance we have about something is similar to darkness; it is distinct from the object and from the self that reveals its earlier existence. It is at the same place as the object, but it is not cognized by the sense-organs. The object that is not cognized stands enveloped by it; and with the cognition of the object, the enveloping ignorance disappears. This ignorance, however, is not brought forth into existence by something outside it. It is an enveloping principle, and as such nothing can be external to it. We can know an object only when the ignorance enveloping it is dispelled. A valid cognition necessarily presupposes ignorance as an entity other than the object.

Does this ignorance envelop the object or the cognizing self? It cannot envelop the object because it is a living being that is ignorant of something. Nor can it envelop only the self, because it always refers to the objects. It refers to both. Whatever is veiled by ignorance can only be the conditioned, the determinate, since the unconditioned can be neither enveloped nor revealed. Veiling and revealing imply the relation of the container and the contained. Ignorance veils the objects and also makes the self project the non-existent into the external world. We project the existence of silver even though the given is nacre. This projection is at the basis of our experiencing multiplicity, distinctions, and relations. The veiling and the projecting activities are those exercised by what we have called the phenomenalistic principle.

This phenomenalistic principle is a principle of energy, in the sense that it is creative of appearances. It is always attached to the foundational consciousness. When we cognize the objects that are external, or when we speak of the ego whose ground is the self, we have this operation of this principle as grounded in the self. In other words, the self is the ground or foundation for all entities that constitute the not-self. As such, this principle of energy can be only other than the self; and at the same time, this energy cannot be other than the phenomenalistic principle. It needs the self and it also gives a distorted picture to the same self.

The knowledge about an object presupposes the existence of that object. If the object is an appearance, the apprehension will also be an appearance. What is the material cause of the object? If it is a real entity, the effect, too, would be real, since the effect partakes of the nature of the cause. Then the appearance would be real. If this material cause has a beginning, we must know the cause of this beginning; and this will lead to a regress. We cannot argue that the material cause has no beginning, because we cannot establish such a contention on the basis of any valid means of cognition. To avoid a regress, we may assume a beginningless material cause. Such an entity cannot be beyond the time-series; and it must be the principle of appearance.

Because of ignorance, there is an enveloping or concealing of the not-self. It cannot conceal or illumine the self. It is inconsistent with its nature and function to envelop the self. Even if ignorance envelops the object, how do we know that it exists? When we know this is a blue pot, the enveloping has ceased to exist for the pot; and then it is impossible to apprehend it. When we do not know that it is a blue pot, we cannot also know the enveloping. It may be argued that since I apprehend the object now, I must assume that it was enveloped prior to this moment. But consider a cognition. It is momentary and it is spread over a number of moments. The object cognized in the second and third moments is also cognized in the preceding moment. And yet we do not cognize any enveloping. First we have the cognition and we know that it is a blue pot. Here we do not become aware of our prior non-apprehension of the object. This awareness comes only later.

One may bring forward the question of recognition. I cognized an object yesterday and I recognize it now. In the intervening time there is the non-apprehension of the object; and my present recognition necessarily assumes this non-apprehension to be true. But is there really a non-apprehension? If I am totally free from any knowledge of the object, how can I recognize it? My recognition of my personal identity can arise even when my self-consciousness does not leave me. It may be said that, during the interval between the past cognition and the present recognition, there is no awareness of any recollection; and that this is a positive apprehension. But we do not have in the intervening time any apprehension of non-apprehension. We seem to arrive at the non-apprehension only inferentially. Moreover, any cognition is a cognition of only an aspect of the object; and even though recollection does not consciously play any part, we seem to cognize the object in its entirety. Even if it is argued that memory is implicitly present here, it is not possible to establish through any means of valid cognition that there is the apprehension of non-apprehension. We can therefore argue that only self-consciousness makes manifest both this non-apprehension and the objects. In other words, self-consciousness is the foundational principle on which are grounded ignorance and the objects.

Within the phenomenal world, we may argue that a particular effect is caused by a specific cause. But can we rationally enquire about the cause of the phenomenal world itself? Kant was guilty of such a step. He limited the concept of causality to the phenomena, and then affirmed that the things-in-themselves are the causes of the phenomena. These things-in-themselves, it appears, are trans-phenomenal. But, in Advaita, the cause of the phenomenal world is said to be phenomenal in itself. In this causal relation, both the terms are phenomenal. Though the phenomenal world of relations has its ultimate ground in the non-relational, its proximate ground is the network provided by the principle of relations. That is, the cause should be distinguished from the ground; and the inability or refusal to have such a distinction is at the root of the Kantian, Hegelian, and Viśiṣṭādvaitic systems of thought. Reality can be the ground, not the cause; and if it were to be both, then Reality would be a relational system only.

Following the lead given by Sureśvara, and accepting the view that the Absolute is both the ground and the content of ignorance, Prakāśānanda argues that the Absolute, through its own ignorance, appears to be bound *as it were*. The phenomenal world is the appearance of the Absolute. But this does not mean that each individual self creates the universe. The Deity, being the content of my ignorance, employs the ignorance that is in me as the material cause of the world. When we say 'through its own ignorance', we are taking recourse to an unavoidable metaphysical expression; for the Absolute does not, and cannot, have any ignorance of its own. From our standpoint, it appears *as if* it were in ignorance. The expression only means that the Absolute or pure consciousness is the ultimate ground of ignorance, as of everything else.

For each appearance, says Vācaspati, there is an earlier appearance functioning as its cause. Padmapāda, however, seeks to find out the principal appearance or ignorance; and Prakāśātman argues that Vācaspati's theory involves the fallacy of self-dependence inasmuch as one appearance depends on another appearance. But Maṇḍana and Vācaspati have observed that, by its very nature, the phenomenalistic principle is one about which we cannot hope to have full intelligibility; non-intelligibility constitutes its character. Prakāśātman defines the phenomenal appearance as '*pratipanna-upādhau traikālika niṣedha pratiyogitvam*', and as '*jñāna nivartyatvam*'. The creative energy or the principle of appearance is that which is negated in, or excluded by, the ground assumed by us. It is that which is sublated or removed by knowledge. It is what forms the counterpart of the absolute negation in any accepted or acceptable ground. Ānandabodha, in his *Nyāya Dīpāvalī*, defines it as '*sad viviktatvam*', that which is other than being. It is a principle of becoming. Citsukha takes it to be '*svāśraya-niṣṭha atyantābhāva-pratiyogitvam*'. Definitions like these take us to a negative account of the principle. In a way, the phenomenalistic principle is negative in character. It negates the true character of Reality; and we can arrive at an idea and experience of Reality by negating that which negates it.

Padmapāda defines appearance as an inexplicable something which is the ground of neither existence nor non-existence. This qualification might be taken to mean (a) the absolute negation of non-existence characterized by existence, (b) the twofold character of the absolute negation of existence and of non-existence, or (c) the absolute negation of non-existence as conditioned by that of existence.[1] The first meaning is not possible, because the appearances have a certain reality which prevents them from being characterized by non-existence, and because such a thing is not found to exist anywhere. When the thing to be proved is improbable, the argument would involve the fallacy of unknown predication.

The second meaning is self-contradictory. Of existence and non-existence, when one is denied, the other may have to be accepted as real. Moreover, the Absolute is said to transcend all determinate predication. Then it would be characterized by the negation of both existence and non-existence; and consequently, the Absolute would have to be an appearance. The absolute negation of existence may be predicated of the water in the mirage; but we cannot predicate of it the absolute negation of non-existence. That is, the argument, as per the second interpretation, rests upon partly provable and partly unprovable foundations. The water in the mirage can admit the negation of existence; and the external world can admit the negation of non-existence. But the two negations are not together found to coexist in a single datum. It may be replied that these two negations *qua* negations are only forms of one absolute negation. When we consider existence and non-existence together, we can predicate the negation of the two to determine the specific character of the water in the mirage.

The third interpretation would involve the union of contradictions. It would also apply equally well to the Absolute; and the inadequacy of the argument referred to in the examination of the second interpretation holds here also. Here we have a unified specific idea. The characteristic feature of the thing to be proven is unique in that two constituents are offered as a single determinate idea. But, in order to establish the character of appearance, it is enough to establish the absolute negation of existence; and the rest of the limitation imposed on the determinate idea is superfluous. This charge may, however, be met by arguing that this superfluity is useful in establishing the character of the phenomenal world as appearance which is neither being nor non-being. The negation of being and non-being would imply that the world is an inexplicable appearance.

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[1] See *Nyāyāmṛta*, 22-24.

One can still argue that the absolute negation of non-existence as conditioned by that of existence is not capable of being established, and that the parts of this concept can be separately proved. These partial proofs do not establish the truth of the whole concept. The separation of the elements of a unitary concept would make the concept no longer unitary.

Let us consider the argument carefully. An appearance is that which admits the twofold character of the absolute negation of existence and of non-existence. Do existence and non-existence absolutely negate one another? Does it mean that one necessarily pervades the absolute negation of the other? Or does it imply that the absolute negation of one is pervaded by the other? Any one of these interpretations can render the Advaitic argument self-contradictory. If existence and non-existence are mutually exclusive, they cannot coexist; and if they do coexist, they are not mutually exclusive. If the negation of non-existence coexists in the ground of the negation of existence, then existence and non-existence are not mutually exclusive.[2]

If the negation of existence is found in the ground of that of existence, the former cannot necessarily pervade the negation of existence. We can negate existence in the ground of the negation of existence; and this cannot then pervade the negation of existence. If existence is grounded in the same along with the negation of non-existence, the former cannot pervade the negation of non-existence. Moreover, the twofold negation of existence and non-existence can be apprehended in the rope-snake which is a third entity; and it is also observed in the phenomenal appearances. The invariable necessary relation between non-existence and the absolute negation of existence is found in entities like the horns of a hare.

If non-existence is found in the ground of the negation of existence, the latter cannot be pervaded by non-existence. And if the negation of non-existence coexists with the negation of existence in the same ground, non-existence would not necessarily indicate the negation of existence.

All these interpretations ignore the fact that existence and non-existence are not mutually exclusive. Existence is that which cannot be contradicted or negated at any time; non-existence, on the other hand, is that which is never an object of cognition in any ground.[3] The horn of a hare is totally unreal because it is never cognized. The phenomenal appearances which are cognized as real cannot be grouped together with entities like the hare's horns. The phenomenal appearances, however, are not absolutely real. We cannot as such designate any appearance by 'is' or by 'is not'.

The relation of pervading is a peculiar one-sided one. The smoke, for example, is the sign or mark or indicator, while the fire is the thing signified, marked, or indicated. Smoke is a necessary sign of fire, but fire is not a universal indicator of smoke. Whenever the sign or mark exists, the thing signified also exists; and when the thing signified is absent, the sign also is absent. Where we find the negation of existence, there we have non-existence; and where non-existence is absent, the negation of existence, too, is absent. If the negation of existence coexists with the absence of non-existence, or if the negation of non-existence coexists with the absence of existence, the necessary invariable relation between the middle and the major terms is lost. In the cognition of nacre as silver, we do have the absence of the existence of silver. Yet the silver is not absolutely or totally unreal. When we cognize the rope as a snake, there is the absence of the existence of a snake; and yet the snake is not absolutely unreal like the horns of the hare. The snake is the object of cognition and it has a ground. It is as such not a non-existent entity. And yet it is not a fully existent real. Here is a situation where we have the absence of existence coexisting with the absence of non-existence.

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[2] See Vittha on Gauḍa Brahmānandī, 50-1.

[3] *Advaita-Siddhi*, 51.

Consider the proposition: 'Where the character of cow exists, the negation of the character of horse exists.' The character of horse implies the negation of the character of the cow. Then the negation of horsehood being absent, the character of cow would be absent. Similarly, the negation of cowness being absent the character of horse would be absent. But it is quite possible that a camel should reveal the negation of both horsehood and cowness.[4] Even then, there can be the necessary relation of the sign and the signified between the cowness and the negation of the character of horse, and between horsehood and the negation of cowness.

The Advaita position is therefore logically sound when it is argued that Brahman or the Absolute is absolute existence which expresses itself in a variety of ways. One of these ways is the form of the external world. These forms do participate in the character of existence.

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[4] See *ibid.*, 55.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: THE TRIUNE PERSONALITY

By Professor Batuknath Bhattacharya

Wave follows wave of spiritual challenge; in the wake of the world-poet Tagore's comes the centenary of the world-teacher—Swami Vivekananda, the apostle of religious harmony. The full significance of the two national celebrations in the annals of Young India is yet to be gauged. A renascence of Indian manhood is assured if the dynamic message of the two supermen be truly laid to heart. Towards his life's close, Swamiji had declared that what he had given was fare for one and a half millennium. The first requisite for nurture on the sumptuous feast for the soul is faith. Two challenges confront liberated India today—one, of the age-old ideals and values, the other, of the modern age. The heroes of thought who keep alive the fire of ancient culture and strive to set the nation on its own feet, who foresee with prophetic eyes the future glories and proclaim them in rousing accents, have only one lesson to impart—the lesson of complete manhood. This cannot be realized by exploiting natural resources only. To stir and strengthen the powers of mind and character is the first essential; material prosperity is an incidental gain sure to follow this inner awakening. The prime objective in the study of their great lives and teachings is to awaken national self-consciousness and the urge to self-fulfilment.

The two levers of human good in this age are admitted to be science and spirituality, and not religion and politics. But whatever the name—religion or spirituality, the elements need to be defined—the virtues, deeds, and ideas that lie at the root. These are generally presumed to be known and not explained in clear and certain terms. This haziness and uncertainty is dispelled by a complete picture of the personality of Swami Vivekananda.

Swamiji's personality may be said to be a triune self and has to be appreciated in its three facets—as a *man*, as a *monk*, and as a *patriot*. On all the three sides, it is equally a-glitter. And the secret of his versatile power was a mind of intense concentration and it showed itself in extraordinary skill and superb performance.

AS A MAN

His devotional songs in the Brahmo Samaj when he was in his bright youth charmed and melted the hearers. Seated at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna, he poured forth a stream of fervent songs which sent the godman into meditative trance. This musical talent sprang from the ever-flowing fervour and intense yearning of his spiritual life. In 1890, as an itinerant monk, he was the guest for a few days of Babu Manmathanath Mitra of Bhagalpur, who was of Brahmo persuasion. Manmatha Babu picked out some of the abstrusest passages of the Upaniṣads and asked Swamiji about their import and marvelled at the fine interpretations that he had in every case. One day he heard the Swami humming in an undertone and invited some local talents to his house and was surprised at the rare gift exhibited by the *sannyāsin* at the soiree. Next day, he arranged for a large musical party at his place. He was sure that the party would break up by nine or ten at the most and hence had prepared no refreshments for the night for his guests. But the Swami went on singing and the hearers under his spell never moved from their seats or thought of food and rest, though the hours wore on beyond midnight. Kailas Babu who accompanied on the *pakhvāj* (an Indian drum, one of the accompaniments for vocal music) was tired and his fingers went stiff and he gave up. But the charmed circle of hearers wanted the performance to continue. Manmatha Babu was profoundly influenced by Swamiji's unique personality. He was a changed man, and in a short while, retired to Vrindaban as a devout Vaiṣṇava.

Stories about the Swami's remarkable intellectual powers are without end. When the Belur Math was started, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, in its many volumes, was procured for the library. A young disciple vented his doubts whether the heavy tomes would be read by anyone. The remark reached Swamiji's ears and he replied that he had gone through ten volumes already. While staying at Meerut, one evening he had the complete works of Percy Lubbock from a local library and finished the whole set during the night. Some doubters put questions and were astonished at his mastery of the contents.

Nobody suspected that the Swami had ever learnt shooting. During a short stay at Camp Taylor in U.S.A., the talk turned on marksmanship. The company stood on the high bank of a swiftly flowing stream and there were egg-shells floating past. After some in the group had tried to shoot them and failed, the Swami playfully wanted to have a turn. He aimed a rifle and every shot was a sure hit at the shifting mark. 'How could he do it ?' they all asked. The secret was nothing but one-pointedness or as the Śāstras prescribe: 'Be intent like an arrow let fly.' Nivedita related how, in a busy street, when a frantic bull rushed hither and thither, the wayfarers fled in panic and none dared to go up to it. The Swami, chancing to be there, mused for a moment if he should act like the others, but then turned back and with a firm resolve going up to the beast, seized its horns. The crowd now took heart and followed him. This, too, is the same story of a sure aim and unwavering will. The *Bhāgavata* holds up the arrowsmith for emulation. Busy at his craft in the smithy beside the king's highway, he never perceives the royal procession or looks up at the noisy crowd or the blare of the pipes and drums. Swamiji's teaching was that, by this inhibition of distracting urges, the mind develops extraordinary powers within. Tramping as an ascetic in the Himalayan slopes, he came upon a village in which the people seemed to be anxiously bustling about. A villager was in high fever and writhing in pain. An evil spirit possessed him, they believed. On seeing Swamiji, they were somewhat reassured and pressed him to relieve the sufferer by his powers. To say that he was no witch-doctor and had no skill in such a case would have been of no avail in the face of their respect for his Order. In this fix, he agreed to sit beside the ailing man in a meditative mood and with all the ardour of his soul repeated the name of his blessed Master. As the Swami passed his hand after a while over the head and the limbs of the sufferer, he felt better, and in a day or two, was rid of his trouble. Long afterwards, an inmate of the Belur Math, suffering similarly, recovered under similar treatment by the Swami, as recorded in his biography.

As a person far above the common run, he was, to put in the words of a Sanskrit poet, dourer than the thunderbolt and softer than a flower. Incomparable in his mental strength and courage, he had yet a very tender nature. In far-off strange climes, he used to cook Bengali dishes with his own hands whenever convenient, and his devotees joyfully arranged for it. He was, besides, most fond of red chillies. Once, on a brief visit to Switzerland for rest and recuperation, he was in great joy to find red pepper in a grocer's shop, and without ceremony, stuffed his mouth with a handful of the rare delicacy, and still munching it, asked the dealer if he had any hotter still! This flair for cooking he had till the last. On an *ekādaśī* day, almost at his life's close, it is so recorded, himself fasting in all strictness, he insisted on serving with his own hands to his Western disciple, Sister Nivedita. He served her himself with a playful chat on each dish, and poured water for her to wash her mouth and hands after the meal. Surprised, she asked the reason of this unusual act, and when he referred to Jesus doing so at the Last Supper, his words made them inexpressibly sad and fearful of the end. Back from his second Western tour, Swamiji landed at Bombay and was in a hurry to reach Belur. To avoid public recognition and detention on the way, he travelled in English costume and arrived at the Math rather late at night, when the main gate had been closed. While the gateman went to fetch the key, Swamiji climbed the wall and, dropping within, went straight to the kitchen compound and stood before the company seated at supper. For some moments, they all looked askance at the 'stranger' in his outlandish garb, and when he was recognized, there was a roar of laughter and jubilation at his unexpected return.

In his Western tours, he had striven to establish India's rightful place in the comity of nations and that with unprecedented success. However, under his ochre robe and philosophic calm and tolerance of all, keen and fiery was his sense of national self-respect. On his voyage home from the second tour, when not far away from Bombay, his equanimity was ruffled by two Tommies who started vilifying Indian society and religion. The Swami was in a fury and holding them by the scruff of the neck, threatened to throw them overboard. Overawed by his manly figure and menacing manner, they asked his pardon and apologized. A like incident marked his return from Mayavati when he was about to entrain at Pilibhit. A British colonel who occupied the second class compartment he wanted to enter was in a rage at the presumptuous native, but seeing his noble and solemn figure and the effusive honour shown to him by his large following, hesitated to vent his feelings. Discreetly, he went to the station-master and told him to eject the monkish passenger. The helpless official was between the devil and the deep sea and inly prayed for the train to steam off and breathed a long sigh of relief when the guard blew the whistle and waved the green flag.

Swami Vivekananda's personality embodied a fiery and fearless spirit—the very picture of an ascetic who had burst all shackles that bind and bow man's nature. The Raja of

Khetri welcomed him to his palace in the fervour of his devotion and with honour meet for the highest. In keeping with the custom of the age, he arranged for songs by a nautch-girl as an entertainment. Swamiji naturally shrank from this treat and politely refused the invitation of the Maharaja. The nautch-girl was hurt, and in a plaintive tone, took up a song importing that equanimity was the mark of a *sādhu,* and in their company, even fallen creatures were redeemed, even as iron turned into gold at the touch of the philosopher's stone. This reminded Swamiji that he was one who should be beyond all differentiation and he joined the party. Years after, a like situation arose when the entry of some public women into the Dakshineshwar temple precincts was strongly opposed by some of his brethren. Swamiji dissented from this puritanic attitude. And he affirmed that a holy shrine fulfilled its purpose when it was an instrument of reclaiming the depraved and fallen and not a resort of crowds of genteel and well-to-do people only. The greatness of Swamiji which won over the world was his melting love and compassion, the child-like frankness and simplicity which lit up his mien and manner. In his early life before *sannyāsa,* he was Narendranath, but Bhuvaneshwari, his mother, called him Bilé. Though in his thirty-eighth year only, his physique broke down under the strain of prolonged work in strange lands in disregard of health and personal comfort. The mother's heart in Bhuvaneshwari apprehended behind it possible offence to some goddess. And she remembered that, as an infant, when Bilé fell ill, she had vowed that when recovered, she would roll him on the ground in a shrine. She now called to her side the world-renowned son and spoke of her wish, and the Swami readily agreed. And, in the courtyard of the Kalighat temple, after rolling like a five-year old boy, he stood up dust-covered—the hero of the Chicago Parliament of Religions!

AS A MONK

In that historic gathering at Chicago, Swami Vivekananda appeared in the majesty of the ochre-robed Indian *sādhu* and awed his audience by speaking as the representative of the most ancient monastic order before the youngest nation of the world. He had to wait for some minutes before the plaudits called forth by his prefatory words of self-introduction subsided. Indian *sannyāsins,* following in the footsteps of *Śaṅkarācārya,* have been venerated as world-teachers. They are at the top of the social scale, on account of their life of dedication to an ideal and invincibility by the power of privation, and selflessness and goodwill towards all creatures. Fearless in themselves and fear-dispelling in their message for man, their sole pursuit is complete emancipation. The grandeur of this monastic character inspired and uplifted the vision and behaviour of Swami Vivekananda. Amidst the affluence and luxury and material prosperity of America, he burst out: 'I long for my rags, my shaven head, my sleep under the trees, and my food from begging.'

He loved to recall the historic anecdote of the Indian gymnosophist—seated on a ledge, above all fear and greed, rapt in the contemplation of the supreme Self—that the world-conquering Alexander sought out on the Indus bank after he had invited him in vain to his own presence. Again, during the Sepoy Mutiny, as the Swami admiringly related, a *sādhu* vowed to silence was fatally stabbed by a miscreant and was repeatedly urged to identify the assailant whom his companions seized, but nothing could break his silence. With his last breath, he simply cried out: 'Thou art also He!' This ideal of selfless asceticism was reflected in Swamiji's own life. He forbade his *confreres*—the *sādhus* of his own Order—to hobnob with the rich or to submit to their whims. Nor did he himself show special regard to Indian princes. In his Rajasthan itinerary, his noble bearing and high repute won the admiration of the Maharaja of Alwar who invited him to his capital and entertained him with all honour. The young prince, then infatuated with English education and Western ideas, had no respect for traditional views and outlook. He made no secret of his contempt for idolatry. One day, Swamiji was invited to a durbar where the Maharaja shone with his *entourage* and the sanctity of images was the topic that cropped up. The Swami casually asked a courtier to take down from the wall a portrait of the ruler, and to the amazed horror of all, urged him to spit on it. Murmurs of indignation broke from all sides. But Swamiji quietly explained that, between the effigy and the original, there was no real connection—it was just a drawing on paper daubed with some tints. What objection could there be, then, to the gesture of disrespect? But, he pointed out, the picture was shown respect, because it represented the person of the prince. Likewise, the image of a deity, though no more than a human fancy, was an object of people's veneration and a real aid to devotion and hence should not be treated with irreverence. He remarked on another occasion that every monastery and ascetic sect of this country went to the dogs through subservience to the rich and dependence on their favour: 'The *sannyāsin* should have nothing to do with the rich, his duty is with the poor. He should treat the poor with loving care and serve them joyfully with all his might. To pay respects to the rich and hang on them for support has been the bane of all the *sannyāsin* communities of our country. A true *sannyāsin* should scrupulously avoid that.'

Many anecdotes of the extraordinary powers that asceticism develops pertain to Swamiji's peregrinations all over India. The Raja of Khetri became his ardent admirer from the very beginning, and it proved the stepping stone in the rising tier of his world-wide fame. The prince had no son and had asked for the Swami's blessings that he may have one. Two years passed and preparations for the American travel were complete and he was due to leave the shores of India. At this juncture, an urgent wire came to the Swami at Madras requesting him to grace the birth-celebration of a son to the Raja. To this request he acceded, eager though he was to start on his momentous voyage. During his Rajasthan travels, his strict adherence to monastic rules and his disregard of bodily wants and discomforts were proved by a curious incident. Travelling under the vow of strict poverty, he had nothing with him but his railway ticket and, as the train rushed through the desert, the wind seemed to shower fire, and water could be had for a price only. His fellow-traveller was a Seth—fat and sleek and pot-bellied—who bought at his pleasure cool drinks and rich fare and sweets. And thus regaled from time to time, he turned to the Swami, twitted him as a renunciant with no needs or desires, looking down on money as an evil. Swamiji heard all, calm and silent. Thus passed the day and night. Next morning, they both alighted at a station and the Seth, as before, had his bath and meal and did not omit his flings at the monk—without hunger and thirst. But, all on a sudden, a banian bustled to the spot with plenty of eatables and said that he was looking for the Swami. Greatly surprised, he asked the merchant as to who had sent these cates and for whom. The man replied that, during the night, he had dreamed that Ramji stood before him and pointed to a figure just like the Swami, bade him repair straight to the station, and serve him with food and drink. The rich Seth was now astounded to see this repast coming from nowhere to the holy man, and contritely fell at his feet and begged his pardon.

After Paramahamsadeva's departure, Vivekananda set out on foot to travel throughout India, his mind turned away from earthly ties, bent on a life of austerities, and filled with his Master's saintliness. For two months he stopped at Ghazipur, attracted by a *sādhu's* extraordinary practice of penances and hardship, routine of devotion, and loving kindness to all. All these made the renowned *yogin* and *bhakta*, Pavhari Baba, an object of worship like a living god in the country side. He was wholly free from the universal obsession of the body, and in proof of his faith and realization, offered himself as an oblation in his sacrificial fire-chamber, furnished with inflammable materials. The story is well known, how one night a thief, who in awe of him had tried to run away leaving behind his booty—the utensils of the *sādhu's* shrine—was chased for a mile or so, overtaken, and forced to accept his ill-gotten gains. Swamiji was charmed by the sweetness of the *yogin's* speech and dealings with men and seriously thought of initiation from this recluse of rare goodness and sanctity, wholly resigning himself to meditative trance and the goal of personal salvation. For several days on end, he resolved to sit at his feet and seek his grace. But, as each day wore into night, he saw before his eyes the luminous figure of his compassionate Master, and at last, forsook the passing fancy. This episode not merely fixed the tenor of his own life, but opened a new chapter in human history. His destiny could not be immured for the rest of his days in a Himalayan cave, to be lost in meditative rapture seeking release from the cycle of births. A mission of world-good, a new phase in human relations—brotherhood and service of the distressed through the spread of Vedāntic monism—such was the aim and purpose of his advent willed by Heaven. This orientation of his spiritual career moulded the function of the Ramakrishna Order of monks and lay behind its unprecedented success as shown by the countless and multiplying centres of Vedāntic thought, homes of service, cultural institutes, educational establishments, etc. at home and abroad.

AS A PATRIOT

Swamiji's distinctive role as a patriot is linked with this decisive turn in his monastic life. The roots of nationalism are a sense of worthiness and a feeling of 'ownness' in all that pertains to the homeland. This awareness of 'mine own' in everything Indian was complete and unreserved in him. It was a different type from the usual political sentiment. It was total patriotism—a love that does not choose or discriminate. Political rights generally enure to the benefit of the literate upper strata, but the marrow and backbone of the nation and the support of its well-being are the tillers and workmen. These producers of its wealth, however, under every polity, miss the cream of life, the lion's share of its substance going to the more powerful ones. To lift them to the human level is the all-time problem in every State whether free or dependent. Swamiji's ever-memorable message is like rolling thunder, rousing one and all to a sense of complete oneness with the soil and its children: 'Take courage, O hero, say with pride: I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother. Say: The ignorant Indian, the indigent Indian, the Brahmin Indian, the outcast Indian is my brother. The Indian is my life, my divinity is India's gods and goddesses—the Indian society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure-garden of my youth, the Benares—the sacred refuge of my old age. Say brother: The Indian soil is my heaven, the good of India is my good; and say further by day and by night: O Lord of Gaurī, O Mother of the universe, give me manhood, O Mother Divine, dispel my weakness, my cowardice, make me a *man*.' The flaming nationalism which throbs in these words is ever needed to stir self-awareness amidst the distractions of alien 'isms'. A keen sense of reverence for Indian creeds and cults, customs and rules of conduct was his abiding trait.

He was the evangelist of Advaita Vedānta, radical and steadfast upholder of the attributeless and undifferentiated Brahman as the sole Truth. At the same time, he had implicit reverence for all the visible images and manifestations of living God-consciousness in all parts of India. When he returned from the West after his second tour abroad, he entered the Kalighat temple with hesitation, but the priests received him cordially and their liberalism was a most pleasing surprise to him. To reintegrate religious faiths was his life's purpose. 'I have come to fulfil, and not to destroy', he used to say in Jesus' words. When his glorious life was coming to a close and his superb physique had broken down, still he trudged on with unflagging zeal—a pilgrim to Amarnath in the lap of the snow-bound Himalayas. With him went Sister Nivedita and, as usual, a stream of two to three thousand souls—ascetics and householders, old and young—in self-forgetful devotion, heedless of hardship and privation—an emblem of ageless India. The frozen heights fitly look like the far-spread abode of Mahādeva, on whom devotees meditate as a silver peak and whose proper image—which Nature moulds in a large cave—waxes and wanes here with the lunar phases. At every step onward, the eye and mind are filled with an awed sense of Śiva's majesty and commune with India's historic genius. As a pilgrim to the shrine of Kṣīra Bhavānī beyond Amarnath, Swamiji chose to be a lone tramp breaking away from the main body unnoticed—the saintly son rapt in the meditation of the Mother Goddess in a ruined sanctuary under Moslem ravages, the image within disfigured by vandalism. The Swami was inly agitated by the shame and sorrow of the incident, and resolved to rebuild the temple, and thus protect the Mother. But an intuition suddenly flashed within like a divine message: The deity protects the devotee, but what is man that he should presume to protect her Divinity? Her pleasure makes the temple, Her abode, prosper or decline. Her will can destroy the creation in a trice. Man is just a puppet, an instrument of Her cosmic sport.

The Swami covered the Indian sub-continent on foot, the temple cities of Deccan, and visioned the true image of the motherland—the splendid *maṭhas* and palaces beside the hovels of the poor—pictures of destitution, ignorance, and disease. Above the agitation for political rights, he rated the succour and service of the common man—submerged, outcast, meekly suffering—as the immediate need and the root of future well-being of the nation. In one of his epistles he wrote: 'May I serve the only Divinity, the God universal—the Nārāyaṇa who unites in Himself the mass of all creatures—the sinners and sufferers of all nations—my only gods—may I have the scope to serve them alone.'

When the plague broke out in Calcutta in 1899, the official measures of relief were inadequate and could not reach the doors of the distressed. Garbage rose in heaps on the streets. Rats and vermin scurrying unchecked spread the epidemic. Immense was the need of men and money. Sister Nivedita showed the way of service and the *sādhus* of the Ramakrishna Mission took up the work of scavenging with her in the bustees and nursing the stricken who were forsaken by their own kin. Money was wanted in heaps to effect the relief. Swamiji said that, if needed, the land bought for the Belur Math would be sold. 'If men perished, what good would the Math serve?' Here is the main thread of all the Swami's thoughts, all his preachings—the good of society, uplift of the depressed, the making of man. Nation-building on these lines was for him true patriotic service, not the support of vested interests or the widening of the privileged classes. When Santhal men and women were digging the earth at Belur, Swamiji closely inquired after their weal and woe and, in keeping with their rooted ideas of tribal purity, treated them to unsalted food and also rich dishes which delighted their simple tastes. To his brethren in holy orders, he said: 'Would you be able to lessen a little the miseries of these folk? Otherwise, what is the good of donning the saffron robe? To give all for others' good—that is *sannyāsa*—true renunciation. Those who are the backbone of the community, whose labour provides its sustenance, the stoppage of whose work would raise outcries all over the city—is there none to console them in their woes?'

Swamiji was the first among Indian leaders to support socialism. 'I am a socialist', he declared for this reason only, if not for any other. Instead of the same classes carrying the same share of joys and sorrows, let there be an exchange. After the itinerary of 1888-92 across the land from end to end, which gave him a direct vision of the motherland, his soul glowed with a patriotism—total and basic—the true source of national greatness. It rests on the pedestal of religion—the imperishable treasure of spiritual tradition and cultural heritage. He was the instrument of destiny to uphold this banner of Dharma. Amidst the fame and honour and grandeur in far-off lands, tormented by the nightmare of his own people's poverty and sufferings, he rolled on the carpeted floor—restless on the luxurious bed. To the immense gathering in Calcutta to welcome him, he said: 'If India wants to rise again, she will have to dispense among the nations what is stored up in her secret treasure.' In explaining to his disciples the truth of history, he said: 'The history of the world is the history of a few men with faith in their own powers.' A handful of powerful personalities can shake the world to its foundations. The moment a nation or an individual loses faith in self it dies. The *awakening of inner strength* is the core of his message. To the privileged class he said: 'You merge yourselves in the void and disappear, and let New India arise in your place. Let her arise—out of the peasant's cottage, grasping the plough; out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler, and the sweeper. ... Skeletons of the Past, there, before you, are your successors, the India that is to be. Throw those treasure-chests of yours and those jewelled rings among them, as soon as you can; and you vanish into the air, and be seen no more.' In absolute faith he reclaimed religion to be the main pulse of India, and at the sunset of his glorious career, he reiterated that if India did not shrink from her quest of God, she would remain immortal. Against the backdrop of all time, this shining figure, this voice of faith is Swami Vivekananda.

WALT WHITMAN: THE LABORATORY OF HIS MIND

By Mr. C. H. MacLachlan

Readers of *Leaves of Grass* are astonished—and often repelled—by long itemizations which some critics have called 'catalogues'. There are prolonged lists of trades and classes, of characters and occupations, races, nations, morals, manners, incidents, and opinions. Even Emerson whose admiring letter did more than anything else to establish Whitman's reputation as a poet, found them tedious. 'I expect him to make the songs of the Nation, but he seems to be contented to make the inventories', the sage of Concord observed.

But to Whitman who had sworn 'not to make a poem nor the least part of a poem but has reference to the soul', they were not inventories, but descriptions of the universal Soul. For wherever he looked he saw God:

'In the faces of men and women I see God,
and in my own face in the glass,
I find letters from God dropt in the street,
and every one is sign'd by God's name,
And I leave them where they are, for I know
that wheresoe'er I go,
Others will punctually come for ever and
ever.'

In his famous letter to the then unknown Whitman who had sent him a presentation copy of the newly-published *Leaves*, Emerson wrote: 'I greet you at the beginning of a great career which yet must have had a long foreground for such a start.' Did Emerson mean the long and profoundly absorptive period through which the introspective

Whitman had progressed to his fulfilment? Or, did the 'somewhere' have a mystic significance lost on the casual reader of his famous letter? Did Emerson mean to suggest some cosmic apprenticeship such as Whitman himself described in 'Vocalism' as essential before one attained 'the divine power to speak words'?

The transformation of Whitman from a competent journalist but literary hack into the poet and mystic has never been satisfactorily explained. As a daily and weekly newspaper editor, he had written excellent editorials, but he had also written a great deal of literary trash. His previously published writings in poetry and prose had given no evidence of genius. What explanation could be offered for such a change? A successful but not outstandingly gifted editor at thirty-four, and a great poet at thirty-six!

A legend, carefully nurtured by his friend and biographer, Dr. R. M. Bucke, indicates that Whitman, about the age of thirty-four or five, experienced a sudden illumination and thereby attained to what Bucke called 'cosmic consciousness', a phenomenon which Bucke argued explained the transformation. 'Writings of no value whatever', Dr. Bucke wrote, 'were immediately followed without practice or study, by pages across each of which in letters of ethereal fire, are written the words of Eternal Life; pages covered not only by a masterpiece, but by such vital sentences as have not been written ten times in the history of the human race.'

The 'sudden illumination' theory has its supporters even among scholars, and it has a titillating appeal to one's love of the supernormal. But there is evidence in Whitman's notebooks of a slower growth. In these, at least eight years before *Leaves of Grass* was published, he put down as jerky, often disconnected notations, what he later organized and polished as his poetical manifesto.

'I cannot understand the mystery,' Whitman wrote in one of these notebooks about the year 1847, 'but I am always conscious of myself as two—as my soul and I; and I reckon it is the same with all men and women.' Whitman's two selves in the years before *Leaves of Grass* were, in fact, strikingly different. Walt the editor was a conformist, conventional in dress and editorial expression, 'respectable' in every way. He was a member of the Democratic Party, he attended clambakes at Coney Island with Brooklyn city officials, kept an editorial eye on the condition of the Brooklyn streets, and urged his subscribers to marry and buy double beds.

Beneath this conventional appearance, Whitman's other self was struggling with increasing power to give expression to the fundamental urges of its own unique nature. Fellow staff members of the Brooklyn Eagle, and Democratic politicians he met at Coney Island clambakes would not have recognized his *alter ego*.

'The ignorant man', Whitman's other self confided to a notebook in 1847, 'is demented with the madness of owning things. ... I will not descend among the professors and capitalists—I will turn the ends of my trousers around my boots, and my cuffs back from my wrists and go with drivers and boatmen, and men that catch fish and work in the field. ... I never yet knew how it felt to think I stood in the presence of my superior. If the presence of God were made visible immediately before me, I could not abase myself. ... I will not be the cart, nor the load on the cart, nor the horse that draws the cart; but I will be the little hands that guide the cart. ... I will not be a great philosopher, and found any school. ... But I will take each man and woman of you to the window, ... and my left arm shall hook you round the waist, and my right shall point you the endless and beginningless road. ... Not I—not God—can travel this road for you.'

Many years later, Walt gave Emerson credit for helping him 'find himself'. His expression was: 'I was simmering, simmering, simmering; Emerson brought me to a boil.' It may have been true, as one interviewer suggests, that Emerson's prose poem, 'Nature' and the essays on 'Spiritual Laws', the 'Oversoul', and 'Self-Reliance' set Whitman's smouldering genius ablaze. The notebooks are overwhelming evidence that he was looking inward, that he was 'inviting his soul'. 'The truths I tell you . . . may not be plain, because I do not translate them fully from my idiom into yours', he tells us. There are flaming lines in the notebooks, but the material shows no attempt at organization. Later, in *Leaves of Grass,* we find many passages that had been set down originally in the notebooks as they floated up from the depths of the imagination. As a journalist, Whitman knew how to say what he wanted to say, simply and clearly. But that was the expression of his conventional self and came, as he later indicated, from the surface of the mind. Whitman's other self was anything but simple and lucid. It expressed itself in symbols and images that were suggestive, but were seldom explicit.

There is much evidence therefore that Whitman's genius manifested itself in a steady growth. His mind had always been meditative and withdrawn. Friends and acquaintances thought him slothful and lazy. But changes were going on beneath the surface that no one but Whitman could have suspected. By 1854 the tinder was ready. Whether Emerson unconsciously supplied the flame or whether it came spontaneously makes little difference. Great and original poetry cannot come out of nothing. *Leaves of Grass* was not an accident.

Many years later, Whitman told Dr. Bucke: '*Leaves of Grass* was there, though unformed, all the time, in what answers as the laboratory of the mind. I was more or less conscious of it, and thought often of taking action in that direction. But you can understand there was much to deter—that, until the impulse to move had become very strong, nothing would be done. I could clearly see that such an enterprise would meet with little favour—at all events at first—that it would be hooted at (as it was) and, perhaps, hooted down. The *Democratic Review* essays and tales came from the surface of the mind, and had no connection with what lay below—a great deal of which, indeed, was below consciousness. At last came the time when the concealed growth had to come to light, and the first edition of *Leaves of Grass* was written and published.'

The change in Whitman seemed radical. Not only was there a change in style; he also underwent a change in appearance that was in keeping with the earlier warning given in a notebook jotting. The conventionally attired editor became the carelessly dressed poet. Many have suggested that the alteration in Whitman's appearance was a pose, a device to attract attention. But his whole inner orientation had changed and the outer, accompanying changes were in character.

There was also a change in purpose. Whitman, the editor, attempted to persuade men's minds. Whitman, the poet and prophet, sought to awaken men's souls. There was even a purpose behind what many persons regarded as his obscurity of expression. He wanted to make people *feel* as well as think. 'I swear I see what is better than to tell the best, it is always to leave the best untold.' His appeal was not to logic but to intuition. *Leaves of Grass* was aimed at the spiritual in man. Walt wanted all who read his poems to identify with him. In his biography of Whitman, Henry Seidel Canby argues that poetry to Whitman was something alive, to be lived. 'It was', he said, 'a living thing in action; not an idea or an emotion. You understood it and absorbed it as you understood and absorbed a person who powerfully impressed you—not so much through what he said as what he was.' Whitman characteristically had his own way of putting it: 'Camerado, this is no book, who touches this touches a man.'

In one of his notebook jottings, years before he published *Leaves of Grass,* Whitman wrote: 'The soul or spirit transmits itself into all matter. . . . A man is only interested in anything when he identifies with it. . . . I guess the soul itself can never be anything but great and pure and immortal; but it makes itself visible only through matter—a perfect head, a twisted skull. ... Wickedness is most likely the absence of freedom and health in the soul.'

Those who saw Whitman as a slothful and lazy man, a loafer who spent most of his time stretched out under apple trees or rambling along the seashore, were wrong. In his apparently relaxed body there was a singularly active imagination, and it was constantly reaching out, extending its spiritual grasp and range. He was the child that went forth every day and became the first object he looked upon 'for the day or a certain part of the day, or for many years or stretching cycles of years'.

He identified with individuals: 'I do not ask the wounded person how he feels, I become the wounded person. ... Not a youngster is taken for larceny, but I go up, too, and am tried and sentenced. ... I am the mash'd fireman with the breast-bone broken. ... I am the man, I suffered, I was there.'

His ability to identify dips far back into space and time:

> 'Rise after rise bow the phantoms behind me,
> Afar down I see the first huge Nothing, I know I was even there,
> I waited unseen and always, and slept through the lethargic mist,
> And took my time, and took no hurt from the fetid carbon. ...
> Now on this spot I stand with my robust soul.'

Many of the poems in *Leaves of Grass* breathe with compassion, because Whitman himself was a man of tenderness and compassion. In 'The City Dead-House' the poet pauses to look upon the figure of a dead prostitute:

> 'Fair, fearful wreck—tenement of a soul—itself a soul,
> Unclaimed, avoided house—take one breath from my tremulous lips,
> Take one tear dropt aside as I go for thought of you.'

'If you consider Whitman's life,' Carpenter wrote, 'you will see that Love ruled it, that he gave his life for love. There were other motives no doubt, but this one ultimately dominated them all.' Another friend remarked that 'he seemed to love everything and everybody'. It was revealed in his compassion and fatherly affection for the soldiers of both North and South whom he nursed during the American Civil War. He was consistently sympathetic and helpful in his relations with other members of his own family. Walt was the principal support of his mother from young manhood until her death, and it was to him that she always turned for affection, understanding, and financial assistance. He unhesitatingly sacrificed his own comfort to provide for a younger brother who had been feeble-minded since infancy. His sister made a bad marriage and was a temperamental problem, but Walt's love and sympathy never failed. The more she suffered, the more he seemed to love her. He had a seemingly inexhaustible love for the downtrodden, the disreputable, the repulsive, the sick, the needy, the rejected.

In the very first poem of *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman establishes the theme that is to be paramount:

> 'One's Self I sing, a simple separate person
> Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse.'

It is the Self, individual and separate, yet also continuous and universal, that is the theme of the *Leaves* just as it is the theme of the Upaniṣads. But had Whitman read the Vedas? In 1856 Thoreau, impressed by similarities between Whitman and the Orientals, asked if he had read them, and Whitman replied: 'No: tell me about them.' But thirty years later, Edward Carpenter was convinced that Whitman had read enough of the Vedic writings to know that his message was continuous with theirs. A glance at these ancient and modern utterances assured him that 'the same loving universal spirit has looked out, making its voice heard from time to time, harmonizing the divine eras, enclosing continents, castes, theologies'. In one of his books Carpenter reproduced passages from Whitman, comparing them with what he regarded as parallel passages from the Upaniṣads, the *Gītā*, Lao Tse, and Jesus in the Gospels. And Rabindranath Tagore remarked in a visit to the United States, that no American poet had such an extraordinary grasp of the essential Oriental tone of mysticism as Whitman.

Whitman was presenting eternal truths, but he wanted to announce them in a new form and in his own idiom. America itself was something new in the world. It was plain to him that the old verse-forms would not serve his purpose. He had employed them in his earlier verse, but those poems today are interesting only to scholars as literary curiosities. The new Whitman required a new mode of expression, and again and again, one meets the words 'modern' and 'democracy' in the poems:

'The prophet and the bard
Shall yet maintain themselves in higher stages yet,
Shall mediate to the Modern, to Democracy, interpret yet to them,
God and Eidolons.'

Whitman's projected new 'literary personality' was a thing of his own creation, and could not have been recognizable to his friends and acquaintances as the gentle and courteous man they knew. They would certainly not have recognized:

'Walt Whitman, a kosmos, of Manhattan the son,
Turbulent, fleshy, sensual, eating and breeding. . . .
No more modest than immodest.'

It was Whitman's self-appointed task to make his fellow countrymen, the men and women of all occupations, aware of the universal Spirit. And, if at times he seemed to get himself bogged down in materialism, if he seemed to become overwhelmed by his catalogues of trades and classes, characters and occupations, it was only seeming, for he tells us that

'In this broad earth of ours,
Amid the measureless grossness and the slag,
Enclosed and perfect within its central heart,
Nestles the seed perfection'.

No human being in a single lifetime could have embraced all of the experiences listed in the 'catalogues', but Whitman felt that his nature was universal in scope, felt himself capable of experiencing them all. Broadway and Brooklyn Ferry, the firemen, the bus drivers, Coney Island, the Hudson River, the concert halls, museums, men and women, good and bad—these were only a part of the raw material out of which he spun his threads, threads which formed the warp and weft of his great poem.

Whitman is welcomed and read in all lands by those who understand his universality, by those who regard intuitive knowledge as nature's patent of nobility. Carpenter said: 'He seems to *liberate* the good tidings and give it a democratic scope and world-wide application unknown in older prophets, even in the sayings of Buddha.' In Whitman's time the earth had begun to shrink. It was his good fortune to live in a time when great strides were being taken in the annihilation of space. Tremendous new developments were taking place in locomotion and communications. The nations of the world were being brought closer together. Whitman thought he saw a divine purpose in all of this and in 'Passage to India' he had this to say:

'Lo, soul, seest thou not God's purpose from the first?
The earth spann'd, connected by network,
The races, neighbours, to marry and be given in marriage,
The oceans to be cross'd, the distant brought near,
The lands to be welded together.'

The Eternal Soul is not limited to man, for Whitman believes that everything without exception has an eternal soul: the trees, the weeds, the sea, the animals. And man has his cycle even as the trees and plants and animals have theirs:

'Ever the dim beginning,
Ever the growth, rounding of the circle,
Ever the summit and the merge at last (to surely start again).
Ever materials, changing, crumbling, re-cohering.'

Whitman plainly feels that spirit is the dominating force behind the universe. Nations, continents, the earth, the seas, the suns, the universes themselves are outward and visible forms of the inner and spiritual reality, and they, like the body, have their cycles. 'Eidolons' are beyond the lectures of the learned professors, beyond the telescope and the spectroscope. It is the prophet and the bard who shall be the interpreters of God and the soul.

The universe is spirit, but each individual soul must find its own way to the great ocean —'the partial to the permanent flowing'. Every thing a person does, says, thinks is of consequence. 'Not a move can a man or woman make, that affects him or her in a day, month or any part of the direct lifetime, or hour of death, but the same affects him or her onward afterward through the indirect lifetime.' In every human life the units are gathered, posted, the whole, whether large or small, added up in its 'eidolon'.

The soul is above all science. It finds its way to Eternity 'in spiral routes by long detours (as a much-tacking ship upon the sea)'. The passage of the soul 'from the real to the ideal' is not easy. It is enormously difficult, but enormously rewarding:

'O, the blest eyes, the happy hearts,
That see, that know the guiding thread so fine
Along the mighty labyrinth.'

RELIGION AND MODERN CIVILIZATION

By Professor Indar Pal Sachdeva

LIMITS OF INTELLECTUALISM

The present age is pre-eminently an age of science, and intellectualism is its dominant philosophy. The standpoint of intellectualism, however, is opposed to all philosophy, which takes its stand upon a spiritual or supra-intellectual view. Under its influence, man has lost his spiritual character and his education has become pre-eminently intellectual. In fact, when man is reduced to the position of a calculating machine, the only kind of education that can suit him is intellectual education. The controversies that have raged in this scientific age, such as those between individualism and socialism, are controversies inside the realm of intellectualism. They do not extend outside this realm.

The real contest is between intellectualism and spiritualism. It is not between democracy and communism, though this particular controversy has divided the world at present into two hostile camps and appears to be the main controversy of the present day. Both democracy and communism are off-shoots of intellectualism and are both anti-spiritual. Against both, spiritualism asserts that science is not the last word in human progress and that the present scientific age is only a passing phase in the evolution of man and that to make too much of it is really to retard the further progress of man. Intellectualism cannot conceive of a higher destiny for man than to be a good citizen, as a man of science or as a scholar, or a captain of industry or soldier or in other similar ways. Can man be really satisfied with this conception of his destiny? Religion which reflects the spiritual view of men answers with a decisive 'no'. It has given this answer through the mouths of all the ancient sages, whether in this country or abroad. We find an echo of the same idea in recent years in Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Dr. Radhakrishnan, Aldous Huxley, and René Guenon. Sri Aurobindo in his great work, *The Life Divine,* has not only shown the inadequacy of this conception of man's destiny, but has indicated what place the present intellectual or scientific civilization occupies in the evolution of man and how it is bound to be superseded by a higher stage in the evolution.

IMPACT OF SCIENCE AND DECLINE OF RELIGION

The present age is unstable and unsafe. It has been a time of great changes, of great wars, and widespread social upheavals; further calamities threaten us now. We have been accustomed to look upon these troubles as political and economic, and we have tried to deal with them on those levels. But lately we have begun to realize that it is a mistake. The conflicts between nations, races and classes are seen to originate at a lower level, in conflict between fundamental ideas, that is, at the spiritual level which is the realm of religion. These conflicts are chiefly due to the fact that old and established religious faiths are no longer effective in controlling men's beliefs and actions. And this is so, not only here, but in all countries, and with respect to all creeds. There has been undoubtedly a decline in religious influence during the last hundred years, accelerated during the last fifty years, affecting to a greater or lesser degree all the faiths of the East and the West. Three principal reasons are responsible for it. But the most important of all has been the impact of modern science and its discoveries. There is no doubt that these discoveries are in contradiction to some of the dogmas, formulated in most cases thousands of years ago by the principal religions of the world. The descriptions in the Book of Genesis which have been central to some theologies—Adam's fall, the idea of hell, of an active personal Devil at large in the world—these ideas have faded away. Our current creeds are founded for the most part on sacred books, revelations, and traditions that are of great antiquity. The most recent of world religions, Islam, was founded thirteen centuries ago; Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, and Hinduism date back to more and more distant ages, right to the dawn of history. The universe and man's place in it are seen to be very different now from what they were thought to be in those far-away times. So it has become difficult for intelligent minds to believe, with the simple faith of their forefathers, that the sacred books of their inherited religions give them a creed divinely ordained. The principal factor in the decline of dogmatic religion is the acceptance, throughout the whole of Western world and much of the Eastern, of the principle of toleration and freedom of thought. This second cause, the greater liberty of enquiry, the tolerance of dissent, is not to be combated, but welcomed. For our own generation, a third factor has come to shake the hold of ancient creeds; it is the moral shock of the two great wars. All these evils of the present scientific age are the consequences of men's failure to fit themselves into their circumstances or their circumstances to themselves.

A LESSON FROM HISTORY

Modern civilization has been on trial and is found wanting. The notion that our civilization might come to grief seems to be in the air. In America, particularly, this notion is weighing on peoples' mind. The Americans seem to us to be standing on the pinnacle of power, riches, and prosperity, and yet the American middle class is quite anxious and apprehensive. The Americans had imagined that, in migrating across the Atlantic, they had jumped clear of history, and now history has caught and pursued them. The lessons of history cannot be treated lightly, for she has skeletons in her cupboard—not just one skeleton, but perhaps, about twenty of them. They are skeletons of civilizations that have come to grief in the past. The first dead civilization that comes to our mind-is the civilization of Greece and Rome. The causes for its breakdown and collapse come home to us, because this modern civilization arose out of its ruins. The ancient civilizations of Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, and Crete are also dead and buried. The facts are clear; the laws of history are pitiless. The modern civilization stands at the crossroads, faced by two alternatives: either to give the lie to history's verdict or to add our testimony to Hegel's terrible epigram: 'We learn only from history that mankind learns nothing from history.'

While other civilizations have perished, the Hindu civilization which is contemporary to those of Egypt and Babylon is still functioning. The survival of Indian and certain other Asian civilizations shows the life-giving character of human and spiritual values. Though the achievements of these ancient civilizations in physical sciences are immensely inferior to the modern, yet they had a truer perception of spiritual values and can teach many salutary lessons in the fine art of living. When a civilization triumphs, it is more by the might of spirit than by physical power that it does so. When it falls, it is through lack of spiritual vitality. Civilization after civilization have declined on account of spiritual bankruptcy. We cannot call ourselves civilized, simply because we use the aeroplane and the motor-car, typewriter and the television. Civilization is actually within us, in our religious ideas, social attitudes, and values of life. Modern civilization is showing steady deterioration in spiritual values. The reason is that Western civilization has given up the true spirit of religion, deposed God from His throne, and installed science in His place. The protagonists of modern civilization consider that thinking of God and life after death are waste of time and energy. According to them, the wiser course is to make the most of this life, and for this purpose, science is both necessary and sufficient. The defeat of the human by the material is the central weakness of our civilization. If civilization is to survive, we must accept that its essence does not consist in wealth, prestige, and power, but in the free activity of the human mind, in the increase of moral sense, in the cultivation of refined taste, skill in the art of living, and above all, in the science of self-realization.

IS RELIGION A DOPE?

Religion faces today a double pronged charge. One of these is popular, and comes from the masses; the other is academic and comes from the psychological discoveries of the time. Thus we find a disquieting consensus of judgement upon religion from two vital quarters of society: from the masses and from the scholars. They contend that religion is shot through and through with unreality and is a make-believe escape of man to God. In between these two profoundly serious groups there are playwrights, novelists, and journalists, busy popularizing both forms of indictment and helping to forge them together with one of the most formidable attacks religion has yet had to face. The form which the popular accusation takes is a well-known phrase: Religion is a dope. The academic form may be summed up in the statement: Religion is phantasy. The reasons and motives for such charges against religion have been various. But the principal reason has been that scientists ridiculed the idea of God. It is related about Laplace that when he presented his system of universe to Napoleon, the latter asked him as to why there was no mention of God in it. To that the scholar politely replied that he did not need God to explain his system. Scientists opposed religion and the idea of God, because at every discovery that a peep at nature awarded, they were opposed by religionists, priests, and their blind followers. It has been said that religion has retarded human progress. It has intoxicated the mind of man and has set man against man. The phrase 'Religion is the opiate of the people' represents a charge against religion which is now widely spread throughout the masses of the modern world.

THE ESSENTIAL *VERSUS* THE NON-ESSENTIAL

We cannot lightly rebut the above popular charge. We must admit the large and disquieting element of truth in it. Much religion there has been, and is, that was and is 'dope', but there is the true spirit of religion which is vastly different. That all the creeds and practices, all the parts, of any religion are not equally important or essential is obviously clear. All religions themselves make distinctions between obligatory and the optional, *nitya* and *kāmya.* That duty varies with time, place, and circumstances is also obvious, and is plainly stated, too, in all religions. The greatest of all Sufi writers, Jalal-Uddin-Rumi, has distinguished between the essentials and non-essentials of religion in emphatic words in his famous book *Masnavi,* which is accepted by the Muslim world as holy next to Koran. Jesus has a blunt saying, conveying a similar idea about 'casting pearls before swine' i.e. those yet unable to appreciate the difference between essential and non-essential. Kṛṣṇa condemns in very plain terms those who are always harping upon outer ritual and neglecting inner wisdom. It is necessary to make a distinction between religion understood in the sense of dogmas, rituals, and creeds, and the spirit of religion which knows nothing of these. The essence of religion is not in the dogmas and sects, in the rites and ceremonies, but in realizing its essence of existence in each man, which is spirituality. Religion in the past has been mixed with magic, quackery, witchcraft, and probably, the superstitious or supernatural phase came first to the primitive man. The dogmas which were once paths to the divine life are now hindrances, and should not be allowed to interpose a barrier between man and God and spoil the essential simplicity of spiritual life. Most of the dogmas and creeds seem unnecessarily complicated by comparison and lack the touch-stone of true spirituality which is the essence of religion. In its true spirit, religion is a summons to spiritual adventure. It is not theology, but practice and discipline. To restore the lost relationship between the human and the Divine is the purpose of religion.

RELIGION—THE SUPREME NEED OF MAN

Religion and existence are inseparably one. Creation of any division between religion and life is basically wrong. The ancient Hebrew people had no word in their language to correspond to the word religion as it is commonly used today. The whole of life as they saw it came from God and was subjected to His law and governance. There could be no separate part of it in their thought labelled as 'religion'. Religion is the very essence of our being. Men might live without art, science, and philosophy, but he could not live without religion. In a sense, as Comte admitted, religion embraces the whole existence, and the history of religion resumes the whole history of human development. We would not be wrong in saying with Max Müller that the true history of man is the history of religion. But according to the current trend prevailing in the modern world, religion is taken to be something which is extra to life. To say that religion has no use in the present world where everything is measured by the coloured glasses of 'economics' is certainly wrong.

It is true that, for sometime, one might afford to neglect religion and live in a 'myth-making state' and believe that one could easily dispense with such a thing known as religion. But every time we are obliged to return to it. The Soviet Government is said to have attempted to abolish religion from the face of their country. But the policy was changed some years ago. It was found that great masses of people were clinging to their icons and their churches and refused to part with them despite persecution. The Soviet Government then decided to 'let alone' and 'let be'. She was obliged to make some room for religion in her social structure. All this only means that revolt against religion as commonly understood and practised may be local and temporary due to special causes as a reaction against priestcraft, but that permanent abolition of religion is impossible for the vast bulk of humanity. As long as human beings suffer from, and fear pain and death, look before and after, and think about such things, so long will the human heart and head demand and cannot be denied the solace that only religion can give. When anguish wrings the heart, then we overwhelmingly realize that it shall not profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul.

The religious instinct is one of the most powerful of human instincts. One of the earliest wants of the primitive man, once his immediate material needs were satisfied, must have been food and comfort for the soul—for even the primitive man possessed a soul. Religion is rooted in the very nature of man, it is organic to him. If the masses are not given true and scientific religion by the philanthropic and the wise, then man will inevitably imbibe false and superstitious religion given to him by priestcraft. Our religion determines the end at which we aim in life and inspires our ideas. Though hidden, it is the most important thing about any man, for it is the mainspring of our conduct. We behave as we do because of the religion we have. So it is false to say that it does not matter what a man's religion is. Religion matters above everything. The great modern scientist Max Planck is, therefore, correct when he says: 'The religious element in man's nature must be recognized and cultivated if all the powers of the human soul are to act together in perfect balance and harmony.'

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(A BIRTH CENTENARY TRIBUTE)

By Swami Mukhyananda

Indian genius has produced during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the modern period, as it did in earlier periods, a series of great personalities in different parts of the country who have been the embodiment of the spirit of India in its varied aspects, viz. Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayananda, Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, Narayana Guru, Gandhiji, Ramana Maharshi, and Aurobindo. Swami Vivekananda has pointed out that 'national union in India is the gathering of her scattered spiritual forces'. All these great personalities, and many other luminaries, have tried to accomplish this task and illumine the Indian horizon, driving away the accumulated dark forces. It has been widely recognized that, in the twin personalities of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, Indian cultural ideals found their highest and broadest expression. They gathered all the past experience of the race, made them living and dynamic in the crucibles of their own lives, and shaped them anew to meet the needs of the modern age for the total benefit of humanity as a whole. In the words of Romain Rolland (1928), while Sri Ramakrishna, 'the seraphic master' 'was the consummation of the 2000 years of spiritual life of three hundred million people', his great dynamic disciple Vivekananda's 'constructive genius' could be summed up 'in the two words *equilibrium* and *synthesis*'. 'He embraced all the paths of the spirit: the four Yogas in their entirety, renunciation and service, art and science, religion and action, from the most spiritual to the most practical. Each of the ways that he taught had its own limits, but he himself had been through them all, and embraced them all. As in a quadriga, he held the reins of all four ways of truth, and he travelled towards Unity along them all simultaneously. He was the personification of the harmony of all human energy.' Thus the essence of the whole panorama of Indian cultural history from the hoary antiquity of the Vedic times down to modern times finds a synthetic embodiment in the lives of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, giving a fresh impetus for the realization and unfoldment in future of heretofore undreamt of possibilities in the national and international fields.

Narendra Nath Datta, who later became world-famous as Swami Vivekananda, was born in 1863 at Calcutta. Endowed with a brilliant intellect, he was highly rational in his approach to life's problems. He possessed a pure and fearless character and an intense urge to seek the Truth. During his college days he imbibed all that the West could teach—its science, philosophy, and rational thought. But it did not slake his thirst for the ultimate Truth and he turned to all the saints and sages he could meet and put them this straight question: 'Sir, have you seen God?' And the only one who answered him clearly in the affirmative, and undertook to show God to him as well, was the great prophet of religious harmony—Sri Ramakrishna, whom he accepted as his *guru*. Narendra Nath imbibed all that the spiritual India could teach and soon soared to the empyrean heights of spiritual realization under the Master's guidance. The best traditions of the East and the West blended in his personality into a beautiful synthesis.

After the passing away of the Master in 1886, Swami Vivekananda traversed the length and breadth of the country as a wandering monk and felt great agony at the appalling condition of the country in striking contrast to her past spiritual glory and material prosperity. His heart was filled with great compassion for the burning misery of suffering humanity. He was seeking ways of raising the material condition of the Indian masses and elevating her women and rousing the country from her long deep sleep. He had realized that India was a land of religion and spirituality, and, in spite of her prevailing degenerate condition, she would again rise to heights surpassing all past glory and greatness if she gathered together her scattered spiritual forces and once again launched forth on the path of her historic mission of the spiritualization of the human race. As he had felt the pulse of India during his travels, he found after much reflection that he could achieve this better and quicker if he captured the strongholds of the West whose dazzling material civilization had cast a spell on India. Soon an opportunity presented itself in the shape of the World Parliament of Religions at Chicago which was held in September 1893. Swamiji participated in it to represent India's religious traditions. The elite of the world were represented there and Swamiji won the day for the liberal, universal thought of India. His ideas were received with great admiration and respect all over the West and he was invited to address numerous crowded gatherings. He worked and widely preached in America and England (1893-97 and 1899-1901) and by his lucid presentation of the vast and profound Indian thought and his own majestic and moving personality once again turned the eyes of the world on spiritual India. Vedanta societies were established in the West and his Western disciples, like the great Sister Nivedita, Sister Christine, Capt. and Mrs. Sevier, and Mr. Goodwin came to help in the task of India's regeneration.

When Swamiji returned to India in 1897, an unprecedented ovation was accorded to him by enthusiastic crowds from Colombo to Lahore and Swamiji delivered to the people his message of hope of a great future India. In powerful and fiery language he placed before them his ideas and plans and exhorted them to work for the all-round national regeneration—spiritual, moral, and material—and the elevation of the masses and women. He urged the people to build up a society 'deep as the ocean' in spiritual matters and 'broad as the sky' on the social plane and help evolve a 'complete civilization' on the basis of the mutual exchange and synthesis of all that is best in the East and the West. His was a message of strength, character, and manliness. The whole country was revivified through his inspiring words and the great leaders of India drank deep from the life-giving waters of this immortal fountain.

To give permanence to this work of national regeneration and spiritual upliftment of humanity in terms of universal, non-sectarian principles, he established the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

Swamiji passed away in 1902 before he was forty, leaving a rich heritage to mankind of new visions of attainment and fresh vistas of development and words of lasting value and supreme wisdom compiled in the eight volumes of his *Complete Works* wherein he exhorts every man and woman to realize his or her inherent divinity and sends out the clarion call to 'Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.'

Here it may not be out of place to recall what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who has been intimately connected with our national movement for independence and regeneration of the country from the early part of this century, said about Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. 'One of the effects of Sri Ramakrishna's life was the peculiar way in which he influenced other people who came in contact with him. Men often scoffed from a distance at this man of no learning, and yet when they came to him, very soon they bowed their heads before this man of God and ceased to scoff and "remained to pray". They gave up, many of them, their ordinary vocations in life and business and joined the band of devotees. They were great men and one of them, better known than the others not only in India but in other parts of the world, is Swami Vivekananda. I do not know how many of the younger generation read the speeches and writings of Swami Vivekananda. But I can tell you that many of my generation were very powerfully influenced by him and I think that it would do a great deal of good to the present generation if they also went through Swami Vivekananda's writings and speeches, and they would learn much from him. That would, perhaps, as some of us did, enable us to catch a glimpse of that fire that raged in Swami Vivekananda's mind and heart and which ultimately consumed him at an early age. Because there was fire in his heart—the fire of a great personality coming out in eloquent and ennobling language—it was no empty talk that he was indulging in. He was putting his heart and soul into the words he uttered. Therefore, he became a great orator, not with the orator's flashes and flourishes, but with a deep conviction and earnestness of spirit. And so he influenced powerfully the minds of many in India and two or three generations of young men and women have, no doubt, been influenced by him.'

Vivekananda's interests were not only national but international. As Nehru says: 'Swami Vivekananda, though a great nationalist, his was a kind of nationalism which automatically slipped into Indian nationalism, which was part of internationalism.'

Vivekananda believed that a healthy, strong, spiritual India would be able to cure many of the ills from which humanity and she herself suffered, and he wanted this country to rise once more and play its role in restoring peace, goodwill, and brotherhood among men and nations. To work for this regeneration of the country, he wanted men and women who, 'fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with the eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of Self, the gospel of social raising-up, the gospel of equality'.

Let, therefore, the student and the citizen, the thinker and the nation-builder, the philosopher and the scientist, the man of action and the man of faith, indeed, all men and women, find inspiration from Swamiji's immortal words about which Romain Rolland significantly remarked (in 1929): 'His words are great music, phrases in the style of Beethoven, stirring rhythms like the march of Handel choruses. I cannot touch these sayings of his, scattered as they are through the pages of books at thirty years' distance, without receiving a thrill through my body like an electric shock.'

HOW TO CALL SWAMIJI'S PHILOSOPHY?

By Dr. Bratindra Kumar Sen Gupta

It has now been universally recognized that the Vedānta of India is the highest spiritual way of life. Swami Vivekananda, the intrepid interpreter of this way of life, has shown and proved beyond doubt that India's salvation lies in the resuscitation of this heritage. It is not merely an academic course of study, nor merely a discipline of the esoteric few. It is, in fact, the expression of the way of thought and the tenor of life that India represents. Let us examine what is meant by this understanding. Firstly, we are very much right in saying that India has upheld for more than 5,000 years a way of life and thought undisturbed, in spite of various extraneous vicissitudes. Such a continuity of life has been the privilege of a chosen few among the modern nations, and India can be regarded as a prominent one among this select band of nations. This way of life and thought has made India what she is today. Material prosperity India has seen through centuries of divergent rules; moral advancement she has also shown to the world at large at different periods of her social life. A Janaka, a Rāma, or a Buddha, or even in our own times, a Gandhi—each of them proves that a reformer of the highest type can be found at all times during her long history to uphold and champion the moral order of the whole texture of creation. But behind and beyond all these currents of her social and political life, far from her kings and generals, her law-givers and social reformers, there has always been an array of those people who dedicated their lives to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. They were human beings in flesh and blood, but they were quickened to the full by their spirituality. A Yājñavalkya, a Naciketas, a Śvetaketu, a Gārgī, or an Apālā—men and women of the society who would pursue their earthly avocations as people of all ages and climes—were so surcharged with a spirit of godliness that they advocated in assemblies or in houses that the only truth is the existence of the one Self in the whole universe. This profound thought cut through the whole social fabric, and the warp and woof of Indian life and thought were made up of a spirit of god-centredness. This one Self is God Supreme whom the *Bhagavad-Gītā* describes as the only unifying thread woven through the multiplicity of apparent creation, as a string going through a row of pearls. It is because this supreme Truth exists that all beings exist, and all beings get their place in the scheme of existence. It is, therefore, a spiritual compulsion with all of us to see the existence of God Supreme in all beings.

Secondly, the life and thought of the people of India represent nothing short of what is meant by a teleological and a dynamic approach to all the problems of the world. Herein Swami Vivekananda's role becomes prominent. The rise and fall of material prosperity or the vicissitudes of moral standards have been in evidence in different ages. People might have failed in some ways and the country might have fallen on evil days. Hence bad administrations and concomitant bad standards sometimes prevailed. This is the evidence provided by historical records, and historical records have some common tales of weal and woe for all countries and nations. But when we take stock of Indian history as a whole, we can say firmly and squarely that people had tried to find out a purpose in their lives and became activized to realize that end. This is what I mean by a teleological and dynamic approach to problems. This sustaining approach is the Alpha and Omega of our spiritual heritage. Hence Swami Vivekananda becomes for us in this century a unique path-finder to this approach. It is well known that Swamiji was a dynamic personality, trying always to raise the lives of people to a higher plane. In his innumerable writings and speeches, he has left for posterity clear indications as to the purpose of all our endeavours in this life. Hence he gave a clarion call to the young men of Lahore, and through them to all of us, in these words: 'Therefore, young men of Lahore, raise once more that mighty banner of Advaita, for on no other ground can you have that wonderful love, until you see that the same Lord is present everywhere. Unfurl that banner of love! Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached. Arise, arise once more, for nothing can be done without renunciation. If you want to help others, your little self must go.'

In all our pursuits, therefore, be it education, service, profession, or administration, it is only god-centredness that creates some purpose to achieve for all beings. This is what Swamiji means by 'banner of love'. Love emanates only when we feel the presence of the Lord Supreme in the whole cosmos, and this love is primarily centred on the Lord. It is therefore the task of human beings, who have tasted of this honey of love and subjugated their own hankerings that belong only to the 'little self', to harness the society, the administration, and the world-conscience to subserve the highest beatitude of mankind. This beatitude is the purpose of all life, but it is the most elusive phenomenon to a world shorn of this glimpse of divine love, metamorphosing the whole human race. Swamiji's greatest contribution has, therefore, been a dynamic philosophy, based on the highest principles and purposes of human life, to be transformed into reality by an incessant urge of self-dedication in the streets and hutments of human habitation. Can we not, therefore, rightly call this exposition of Indian thought a system of practical Vedānta?

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Advaita holds Brahman as the substratum of the world phenomenon, but not its material cause. This cause is '*avidyā*' or 'ignorance', which is itself phenomenal in nature and is an inexplicable 'principle of creative energy, in the sense that it is creative of appearances'. Dr. P. S. Sastri, M.A., M.Litt., Ph.D., Head of the Department of English, Nagpur University, designates this ignorance as 'The Phenomenalistic Principle', and explains in perspicuous modern language the central place of this principle in Advaita metaphysics. ...

'Swami Vivekananda: The Triune Personality' is yet another article in the birth centenary year of Swami Vivekananda from the pen of Professor Batuknath Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L., formerly of Surendranath College, Calcutta. In his beautiful way, Professor Bhattacharya has painted brightly the three aspects of the personality of the Swami—as a man, as a monk, and as a patriot. We hope this article will be read with profit and interest by our readers. ...

Mr. C. H. MacLachlan, an ex-editor and publisher of *The Long Islander*, the journal started by Walt Whitman in the year 1836, is closely connected with the Vedanta Society of New York. In his interesting article, 'Walt Whitman: The Laboratory of His Mind', he tries to explain the background and elements that went to help the great American poet in the creation of his *magnum opus, The Leaves of Grass*. And in this effort, Mr. MacLachlan has been able to throw ample light on a difficult subject which deals with the 'transformation of Whitman from a competent journalist, but a literary hack, into the poet and mystic'; and this, as the writer says, 'has never been satisfactorily explained'. ...

Professor Indar Pal Sachdeva, M.A., of Allahabad, is a new contributor. In his article, 'Religion and Modern Civilization', he says that, in spite of the impact of science and technology on the modern civilization, the importance of religion in human life cannot be overemphasized, as it is the basic need for truly happy and prosperous living. ...

Swami Mukhyananda is the head of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Chandigarh, Punjab. In his article in this issue, he briefly deals with the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda. ...

Dr. Bratindra Kumar Sen Gupta, M.A., D.Phil., Reader of Sanskrit, Burdwan University, says in his article that the Indian way of life is essentially a spiritual one, though it does not deny the importance of economics, politics, sociology, etc. in their proper places. Swami Vivekananda, in our own times, is the best interpreter of this way of life and has 'proved beyond doubt India's salvation lies in the resuscitation of this heritage'.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

COGITATORS' TREASURY (THOUGHTS AND WISDOM FROM MANY MINDS). BY SAM GOODMAN. *Published by Philosophical Library Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York-16. 1962. Pages 385. Price $ 6.00.*

The present century, with its wars of destruction and unrest, has ushered in the era of disintegrationists in the philosophic world, too. The logical positivists seek to banish metaphysics and to transform philosophy into an inquiry into language. In such a bewildering chaos, it is encouraging to find Sam Goodman believing fervently that the thoughts and wisdom of mankind provide a rich treasure of practical and inspirational philosophy. The passages he has selected are a delight to read; and at the same time, they set the mind thinking on the varied problems of life.

The treasure-house gives us thoughts on philosophy, thought, reason, psychology, life, knowledge, science, and everyday problems. The aim is to enable man to raise himself to higher levels of understanding, to make him understand fully the maxim 'Know Thyself'. As Goodman remarks: 'Man's most precious possession is his mind, yet he neglects it completely and permits it to develop with the whims of chance.' This element of chance must be eliminated; and it can be done so only if man is willing to become logical and practical once again.

Dr. P. S. Sastri

LOGIC AND EXISTENCE. By Martin Foss. *Published by Philosophical Library Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York-16. 1962. Pages 236. Price $ 4.75.*

This is a remarkable book, not however for its philosophy, but for its poetry, feeling, and imagery. If we do not take the Introduction too seriously, in fact if we drop the Introduction completely and read on, we should get the best out of the book. It is not true to say, as the author seems to assert in the Introduction, that *nirvāṇa* is the goal of all Eastern philosophy, nor is *nirvāṇa* to be identified with Brahman. It is also not true to say that Eastern philosophy is all based on emotion. Again, in regard to Western philosophy, it is not thought alone that is the guiding light. 'Intuition', too, is there. The author sees it, but does not approve of it.

If we by-pass these few introductory observations in the book and take the main body of the volume, we find it richly rewarding. Starting with an analysis of 'fact', the author elucidates, in the first part of the book, the philosophical conception of substance, function, law, causality, and purpose. He claims to deal with abstractions. For the West, it is the 'sober and unemotional discovery of the "universal", the abstract "being" as such ... as an abstract expansion of thought' that is the goal of philosophy. This, however, does not seem to satisfy the author. So he wants to supplement it or synthesize it by the Eastern view of Brahman reached through non-mediate direct *darśana*. Perhaps, this is what he attempts in the second part of the book, where he plunges into a deep analysis of aesthetics, melody, grace, love, and generosity. The author concludes: 'Faith and knowledge belong together as soul and body. ... The reality of the soul, of personality, and its communion is the full reality, from which the body receives derivative and contingent existence' (p. 218).

There is nothing new in all this. Our ancient seers came to the same conclusions, several times over, in the long distant past.

As one reads through the chapters, excellently written, one feels more and more convinced about what Bergson has to say about intellect and its power of abstraction. In his brilliant essay on 'The Life and Work of Ravaisson' (*The Creative Mind* by Henri Bergson, Wisdom Library, N.Y.), he remarks that 'the farther it (intellect) goes in the series of generalities, the higher it feels it is rising in the scale of realities. But what it takes to be a higher spirituality is only the increasing rarefaction of the air it breathes. It does not see that the more an idea is general, the more is it abstract and empty, and that from abstraction to abstraction, from generality to generality, one proceeds to pure *nothingness*'. This is the nothingness which the author condemns in Eastern philosophy and it is just this nothingness that Western philosophy seems to attain as the crown and culmination of its thinking process. There can be no more striking condemnation of the exaggerated claims made for the achievements of reason!

Despite these limitations, the reviewer has no hesitation in saying that this is a stimulating and elevating book. It merits the appreciation of all serious students of philosophy. A philosopher can always appreciate without accepting.

Professor P. S. Naidu

VOICE OF THE SELF. By Swami Nityananda. *Published by P. Ramanath Pai, 'Meera Bhavan', 8 Hanumantha Rao Road, Balaji Nagar, Madras-14. Pages 100. Price Rs. 2.*

The volume under review is a compilation of 'the spontaneous words' of Swami Nityananda, the saint of Vajreshwari (Bombay), 'as they came from the Master's mouth'. His words 'appeared as though they were direct answers to unexpressed queries and doubts entertained by some of the close devotees who had gathered at his feet' and these were faithfully chronicled. Swami Nityananda was a spiritual personality of a very high order and had attained self-illumination after intense *sādhanā* and self-mastery. Swami Chinmayananda writes in his introduction to the book: 'Swami Nityananda is one of the rarest jewels among the saints of the recent India.' 'Illiterate and uneducated though he was from the standards of modern concepts of education, he was one of the most cultured men, who threw no stones at others but blessed them both in their material life and in their spiritual awakening.' The saint's words, as recorded in this book, reveal the great depth of his realization and are 'vivid, brilliant, and even inspired'. We have no doubt that they will be of great help to the seekers of Truth and will illumine their understanding.

The book contains a foreword by Sri Sri Prakasa, the former Governor of Maharashtra, who met the saint and here records his impression. The English translation (from original Kannada) by Sri M. P. Pandit of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, is very lucid and commendable. While going through the book, one feels as if these words directly touch one's soul. The general get-up and printing are quite attractive.

S. C.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE VEDANTA SOCIETY, ST. LOUIS, U.S.A.

Report for 1961-62

Sunday Services: The Swami-in-charge of the Centre spoke on different religious and philosophical topics in the Society's chapel on Sunday mornings. Total number of Sunday services held: 46. The usual services were suspended during the hot season for about six weeks, but the Vedānta students held regular meetings for prayer, meditation, and for listening to the Swami's recorded lectures.

Meditation and Discourse: On Tuesday evenings, the Swami conducted and expounded Chapter XI of *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*. In the beginning of the new year, he took up the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. Total number of Tuesday meetings conducted: 46.

Additional Meetings: The Swami held two special meetings in the Society's chapel, one for young and adult groups of two Presbyterian churches, and the other for twelfth grade students of a school.

Visiting Swamis: When Swamis from other centres visited the Centre, special meetings were arranged.

Anniversaries: On the birth anniversaries of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, Śaṅkara, Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Brahmananda, and such festive occasions as the worship of the Divine Mother, Christmas, and Easter, devotional worship and special services were conducted.

Out-of-town Guests and Visitors: The Society had the privilege of receiving about forty guests and visitors from different places in the U.S. and abroad. Most of them interviewed the Swami and attended the services.

Interviews: Many came to the Swami for spiritual guidance and for discussion of their personal problems. About one hundred interviews were given by him.

Library: The library of the Society was well-ultilized by its members and friends.

Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda: To carry out the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, a centenary committee was formed. The presentation of two hundred volumes of *Vivekananda: The Yogas and Other Works* (compiled with a biography by Swami Nikhilananda) to universities, colleges, and public libraries was included as a special feature of the celebrations.

The Extension of the Vedānta Work in Kansas City, Missouri: The Vedānta students of Kansas City, Missouri, met every fortnight, when they listened to the Swami's recorded lecture delivered in St. Louis. They also held an open meeting once a month on Sunday for the same purpose. Many borrowed books from the Vedānta library there.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVA PRATISHTHAN CALCUTTA 26

Opening of the General Hospital Block

By Sri Jawaharlal Nehru

The newly constructed six-storied general hospital block was formally opened by the Prime Minister of India, Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, on Monday, the 1st of July 1963, in the presence of a distinguished gathering including the Governors of West Bengal and Maharashtra, the Chief Minister of West Bengal, and ministers of the Central and the West Bengal Governments. The Prime Minister said on the occasion:

‘I am happy to be here, and as you have just heard, I visited this institution, not this new building, but its predecessor, over a quarter of a century ago. It was rather a humble effort then, but it has grown and now we see its fine six-storeyed hospital building. I am glad to be here, because such an effort and such a fine hospital in the heart of Calcutta deserves every encouragement. And I am specially glad because the Ramakrishna Mission has sponsored this and is running it. In various parts of India, and to some extent outside India too, I have seen the work done by the Ramakrishna Mission hospitals and their other forms of service. I have very much been impressed by the quiet, unostentatious, and efficient way these Ramakrishna Mission foundations have been working, and this has always attracted me to their work, and we feel that we should do everything to help their work and help the Mission to carry on their good work of service.

‘So I have come here and I have seen this fine new hospital building which has grown up, and I feel much impressed and I wish it all success. I am sure it will have success, because it has all the reasons behind it which commands success; the reasons being, the efficient way in which the spirit of service is preserved and the voluntary help by the large number of people of this great city of Calcutta. So I wish this venture every success and I am glad to open the new hospital block of this Pratishthan and I am sure it will prosper and grow and be of service to the people of Calcutta and outside.’

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVIII SEPTEMBER 1963 No. 9

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—:o:—

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Allahabad Math, January 12, 1935

After some conversation on the new temple of the Master which was now under construction at Belur, one of the assembled devotees asked Swami Vijnanananda : 'Yesterday you said something about the message of the Vedānta and the Master's teachings which I could not comprehend well. Will you kindly elucidate it further today?' To this Maharaj said: 'According to the Vedānta, realization is possible only if you renounce the world. But our Master does not say so. He says renunciation of the world is not essential. If you are in a detached mood and disinterested with regard to the fruits of your action, you need not renounce the world. At the same time, he tells you to give up wealth and lust. That is the way with great souls: their statements seem at first sight to be so contradictory and their teachings also appear sometimes to be obscure.

'The Bible describes God in all His three forms, with attributes, without attributes, and as incarnate. Whenever God incarnates Himself in human form, He reveals Himself as such, as men would not understand Him otherwise. I am studying the Bible nowadays. It is a very forceful exposition, and inspiring also because it expresses truth. The teachings of the sages are all very inspiring and forceful, because whatever they said was based on their own practical experience and not on hearsay. Whatever they say is true for all time—past, present, and future—and for all states—waking, dream, deep sleep, and transcendental.

'In the transcendental stage of complete merger with the Infinite, there is no outward consciousness; only a slight sort of feeling remains there. When Śukadeva was practising spiritual austerities in the Himalayas, he would hear on all sides only one sound—Brahman. Jyotir-Brahman (the light of Brahman) was the only sound he heard echoing in the mountains. Do you know what the 'light' is ? It is very sweet and soothing, representing joy and peace and enlightenment. In the English translation of *Devī-Bhāgavata,* I have written about Śukadeva; you can read it at leisure. It is just this light which I saw at Sarnath in front of the image of the Buddha, an infinite unbroken ocean of light, with myself as a tiny speck in it. The sound was like that of breakers, only it was sweet and joyous. The whole universe faded out, myself including. Physical consciousness was almost obliterated with only a trace of body-sense left. There was an intense joy. Even now, as I speak about it, I am filled with ineffable joy.

'The Buddha's personality was unique. Kāśyapa and other Brāhmaṇas, before they became his disciples, wanted to kill him. He was once made to sleep in a room full of snakes who, they thought, would make short work of him. They peeped into the room at night from time to time. On one of these visits, they found the room brightly illuminated. A huge jewel-crested snake had its hood spread over the head of the Buddha. They were rendered speechless at the sight, and in the morning, fell at his feet and begged his forgiveness. He forgave them. They became his disciples.

'If any person, at the time of his death, can fix his mind on any of these great souls, he is sure to fare well in the other world.'

Allahabad Math, January 16, 1935

Swami Vijnanananda had been studying the Bible these days. On this day, he had started reading the transfiguration of Christ according to the Gospel of St. Mark. There was only one listener, a solitary devotee, who listened with all reverence. In the course of reading, the Swami said: 'Jesus took James and John on to the top of a mountain where he became transfigured and his body assumed a lustrous brightness. Many sublime teachings of Jesus are incorporated herein. But he told his disciples: "These are not everything; there are many things subtle and esoteric about which I will tell you." I think, by this, he had meant teachings about meditation, contemplation, ecstatic moods, and so on.

'There are many things to be learnt about Self-realization. The more you learn, the greater will be your desire for further knowledge. There is no limit to the acquisition of knowledge. Purity, truthfulness, and honesty should be the basis of your life. And there should be faith. With these as foundations, a man will have full contentment in life, in whatever circumstances he may happen to be. That is the sign of a religious life—contentment in all circumstances.'

A couple of days after the above conversation, the subject of Jesus Christ's life and message came up again in course of talk. Addressing that particular devotee, Maharaj said: 'Other incarnations have, almost without exception, addressed God as "Father", whereas our Master was the first to invoke Him as "Mother". Keshab Babu once asked him to explain the reason for this, to which he replied: "You have seen the limitless ocean and the infinite firmament. With such manifestations of Śakti (primordial energy), can't you recognize the Mother? The Mother is the embodiment of Śakti. Nothing will come unless you call on the Mother. She is everything. As the Mother (or Śakti personified), She holds the sky and the universe and everything else. Without the Mother, you can hardly comprehend the Father. Without the Mother's help, can you recognize the Father?" Then Keshab Babu understood, and since then, he started worshipping God both as Father and Mother.

'Throughout the Bible, you read about lepers, which only shows the pitiable condition of Jews in those days—steeped in poverty, misery, and sickness. That is why you find Jesus every now and then healing the lepers.

'Our Master also possessed miraculous powers. We, of course, understood very little of him, only Swamiji comprehended him to some extent. He told the Master that he had no faith in gods and goddesses and only believed in the light of Brahman. One day the Master put him in a trance, and immediately the universe with everything in it faded before his eyes and he cried out in terror: "Oh, what is this you have done to me? I have my parents living." At these words, the Master smiled and said: "All right, nothing more at present." Does not that indicate the wonderful power of the Master?'

Remaining silent for some time, Maharaj continued: 'I was also inclined at first to worship God as Father. I, of course, entertained feelings of respect and reverence for the Mother, but felt greater attraction for the Father. Now, I invoke the Mother morning and evening and feel as if I am a small child sitting on Her lap.'

Allahabad Math, January 31, 1935

Just before the evening, some devotees were sitting round Swami Vijnananandaji. The talk going on was about *mukti* (salvation) and the life beyond. Maharaj was saying: 'At the time of death, a man loses his wits, he becomes enveloped in a sort of mental darkness. If only once he can utter the name of God at that time he may be saved as God takes charge of him. Unless one has acquired the habit of constantly thinking of God by long practice, everything becomes confused on account of the pangs of death, and one cannot think of God even once. So what is necessary is to constantly meditate on Him and pray to Him.

'Generally, after death, men go to *pitṛloka*—the world of their departed forefathers. When a man leaves his mortal frame, the angels of death come and carry his subtle body to a region according to his previous *karma* (actions), where he is welcomed by the denizens of that region. He passes his time pleasantly until, again in accordance with his *karma*, he comes down and is born again somewhere. If he is not born in congenial surroundings, he casts off the mortal coil and is born again in a more congenial environment. The influence of stars may also determine the length of a man's life. Confinement in a physical frame also diminishes the strength of mind. After giving up the mortal body, the mind gets great strength. Pure souls can know and understand all this. Our Master saw Swamiji come down from the *saptarṣi-maṇḍala*—the heavenly region of the "Great Bear"—where the seven sages dwell.'

* * * *

'The Gods and sages come to have a bath in the Triveṇī (the confluence of Gaṅgā, Yamunā, and Sarasvatī at Allahabad). The best periods are the morning, midday, evening, and midnight. If they do not come, the place is no longer thought of as a holy pilgrim centre.'

'I have described to you how Mother Triveṇī revealed Herself to me. I had just had a dip in the sacred confluence, when I saw Her as a small girl with three braids of hair hanging from her head. Rakhal Maharaj, on learning about this vision, told me that the Goddess had actually appeared before me. The test of the reality of a vision is that the exhilaration of it continues for a long time. There is a feeling of intense joy and the heart is illumined. Even now the recollection of that Goddess as a small girl gives me a feeling of delight.

'The God Śiva also appeared before me once at Varanasi. From Allahabad, I was on my way to that place in connection with the construction of the Sevashrama hospital wards. I was going from the station in an *ekka* (a horse-drawn carriage) which overturned while taking a turn and I fell down with my leg inside the wheel and my heavy box on top of it. I was badly hurt, but managed to reach the Ashrama in another *ekka*. The doctors took charge of me, but I was running high temperature and prayed: "O Lord Viśvanātha, I came to your place in connection with the Master's work and this is what has happened. How will the work be done?"

Then I fell asleep and, at about two in the morning, the Lord Śiva, with matted locks and a smiling face appeared before me. I said: "O Lord Śiva, have you come to take me? But I cannot go now; I have to complete the Master's work first." But, without waiting to listen to me, He, with a radiant smile on His countenance, slowly came forward and held me in a close embrace. Immediately, my body became cold as ice and I said: "Now, farewell Lord; I have to do the Master's work." Smilingly He left me, and strange enough, in the morning, I found myself free from fever and the wounds had also healed. Even now I can see that benign countenance of Śiva, and it gives me a feeling of intense delight to talk of Him.'

Allahabad Math, February 1, 1935

In the evening, there was a gathering of monks and devotees. Maharaj said: 'Yesterday, in the evening, a good conclusion was reached on meditation. There are three particular regions of the body which are good for the purpose of meditation; the heart, the spot between the eyebrows, and the nerve centre in the brain (*sahasrāra*). Our Master used to say that the heart is the best place for meditation. Mahāvīrjī tore his chest open and showed the images of Rāmacandra and Sītādevī there. The physical heart is somewhat to the left of the chest, but Mahāvīrjī shows the meditation region in the centre. Meditation in the core of the heart is advisable, though that is not at all easy. Our Master said meditation on his picture would be enough. Go on doing it with all your heart and soul.'

A devotee: 'An intimate friend of mine has made good progress in the realm of spirituality and sees all kinds of luminous visions. But there he has stopped and cannot advance any further in spite of his best efforts. He has asked many *sādhus* and holy men, but got no assistance from anyone. He very much wants to see you or Gangadhar Maharaj some time.'

Maharaj: 'Yes, it can be arranged at Belur Math when I go there.' After a long silence, Maharaj added: 'If one invokes the Master, he can see so many luminous objects. But he must be invoked with all the heart and soul. He is the omnipresent light of the world, pervading the entire universe.'

Allahabad Math, February 10, 1935

Numerous monks and devotees were present in the evening. Songs of invocation of the Universal Mother were sung and hymns chanted, to which Maharaj listened with rapt attention like one entranced. After a time, he slowly said: 'Our idea is that Mother Kālī, in a whirl of delight, is dancing like one possessed. The universe is quaking under the rhythm of Her feet and rushing forward towards annihilation. To check this frenzied dance of the Mother, the Lord Śiva fell flat on the ground before Her; and when She saw Him lying at Her feet, She was overcome with shame and stopped Her dancing.'

Then Maharaj became introspective and stopped talking. And, after some time, he started speaking about the Master: 'Our Master was a very unassuming person and spoke also in a simple and straightforward manner. What he said seemed to be quite easy of comprehension. But the more you thought about his teachings, the more difficult they appeared. He had said to Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda): "I hold the key that will open the gate for you to *nirvikalpa-samādhi* (absolute oneness with the Infinite). Now you will do the Mother's work and then you will be immersed in this *samādhi*." Now I find there is no end to the Mother's work. The universe is in a perpetual whirl of motion and work has to go on constantly. Swamiji used to say: "My work here is done. Yet I am working in accordance with the Master's instructions, but my heart is always in Brahman."'

Then, with regard to himself, Maharaj said: 'Swamiji Maharaj once said: "I cannot say anything to Peshan (Swami Vijnanananda), because I see the Master in him." In reply to this, I said to Swamiji: "But he is in every created being, and it is not surprising that, with your penetrative eyes, you will see the Master in me also." But Swamiji insisted: "No, Peshan, it is not that. I see distinctly that the Master has made his habitat well in you"; to which I replied: "You can say whatever you like, but I don't feel anything like what you say." What he meant was that the Master had occupied my heart. Whether I understood it or not, I felt happy to hear it. And it is a very good thing to stick to one fixed ideal. Steadfastness in a good cause is praiseworthy. I had always this attitude and have it even now.'

On another occasion, Maharaj felt very happy when he found a devotee sticking to his promise, and said: 'Our Master was a perfect example of adherence to truth. Once he said he would go to the lavatory, he would be sure to go, whether he felt an urge or not. If the Master had to go to Calcutta and the carriage was at the door, he would immediately get up and call the cab-man who, however, might be enjoying a smoke and taking it leisurely. The Master was impatient inasmuch as people would be waiting for him expectantly at Calcutta, and he wanted to be there as early as possible so as not to keep them waiting. He would feel relieved only when the cab started. Swamiji also invariably kept his word and never violated it except for very special reasons.

'The Master's adherence to rules and love of truth were really unique, unseen elsewhere. He used to say: "If in one particular case I am proved to be wrong, you will know I am wrong in every case." What a marvellous statement to make! It is impossible to speak like that, unless one is firmly established in truth. What a wonder! How strong the words and how sublime the idea!'

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE SOCIETY

[Editorial]

The importance of the individual as a reckonable entity and the complex problem of relationship between the individual and the society have been the subject of controversial discussion from the very early times, and many thinkers—philosophers, sociologists, and politicians—have made various studies and have put forth different theories on the subject. Some are of the opinion that the individual is more important than the society and that every liberty should be given to him, even at the cost of society or organization. On the other hand, some say that society as an organized unit is more important, and all considerations concerning the individual are only subservient to the social and organizational welfare and progress. Individualism, however, held its ground for a long time both in the West and the East. Prof. C.E.M. Joad, in his *Guide to the Philosophy of Morals and Politics* writes: 'For the last two thousand years, the conscience of mankind has insisted, at any rate in theory, that the individual should be treated as an end in himself. For what, it may be asked, is a man for, or, as the Greeks would have put it, What is the true end of man? We do not, the fact must be admitted, know. But there is one thing upon which that part of mankind which still accepts Christ's teaching is agreed: it is that the true end of man includes the maximum development of his personality. We expect it, in other words, of a man that he should develop his faculties to their utmost capacity, utilize his powers to the full, and realize all the potentialities of his nature; that he should, in short, become as completely as possible himself. And since he cannot do these things alone, it is the business of the community to make the good life possible for all its citizens: not any sort of life, be it noted, but the sort of life that seems to men individually to be good. "Political societies", to repeat Aristotle's aphorism, "exist for the sake of noble actions and not merely of a common life."'

The concept of individualism is, as a rule, associated with the type of society or state according to which its welfare consists in the well-being and free initiative of its constituent members. The principle of individualism insists that each citizen has the right to form his ideals, to choose his way of life for himself. 'That we should be able to freely express our thoughts and desires, on the platform, at the street corner, or in the press; that we should be entitled to worship whatever God we please and worship Him how we please, and that we should be entitled to worship no God at all'; that we should be free to choose the profession or way of life we think best for our maximum economic and intellectual welfare; that we should have the 'four freedoms' in an unrestricted way—these things and others like them taken together are the content of what is known as individual liberty—the core of individualism. It is often contrasted with collectivism and various forms of socialistic or communistic concepts where the consideration for the individual is subordinated to the good of the society or community, as determined by the group of people who rule the society. The concept of individualism, though old in origin, gained strength from the doctrine of *laissez-faire* that arose in the eighteenth century. This doctrine found, among others, a powerful advocate in Jeremy Bentham, a progressive political thinker of his time, who swayed the thoughts of many intellectuals and influenced a large number of institutions of the West in the nineteenth century. His arguments were: 'Since every person is the best judge of his own happiness, the more free he is left in his search for its attainment, the more certain he is to reach it; and since each man is equally entitled to happiness, all artificial barriers imposed by government in the way of its realization are necessarily evil.'

The principle of individualism looks apparently to be very sound, good and attractive. It has the elements to make the individual vigorous in his struggle for existence and make him optimistic and provides incentive to personal efficiency of the highest order. But when practically applied to the fields of economics and politics, without proper restrictions and safeguards, it allows scope for unhealthy competition, unbridled power-concentration and blind selfishness. A tempering principle, therefore, is necessary as a safeguard against these undesirable tendencies inherent in individualism. Herbert Hoover, writing on *American Individualism*, observed significantly: 'Our social and economic system cannot march toward better days unless it is inspired by things of the spirit. It is here that the higher purposes of individualism must find their sustenance. Men do not live by bread alone. Nor is individualism merely a stimulus to production and the road to liberty. ... Spirituality with its faith, its hope, its charity, can be increased by each individual's own efforts. And in proportion as each individual increases his own store of spirituality, in that proportion increases the idealism of democracy.'

But, as it very often happens, love of personal gain veils the correct vision of man and he is prone to run into dangerous ways regardless of the higher principles of life. Love of gain brings in its wake love of power and power ordinarily corrupts the powerful. That is what exactly has happened where individualism got the upper hand. Instincts of self-preservation, acquisitiveness, combativeness, thirst for power, and adulation grew so much in the powerful individuals that they became extremely selfish and oppressive and the society as a whole started suffering. Many cases of inequity, tyranny, domination, and injustice made the majority of mankind unhappy and miserable. The personal superiority and hunger for power reigned supreme, and altruistic outlook suffered heavily. And as these things went on increasing—as some undesirable things always do for some time—reactions in various spheres of thought and action set in. They gave birth to a number of social and political philosophies to counteract the evils of individualism. The comforts and luxuries of a handful of individuals at the expense of the teeming suffering millions could not be tolerated for long and this sort of ultra-individualism as a philosophy of social and political structure had to receive a setback though, even now, the importance and value of individual qualities and personal character are a recognized requisite for progress and prosperity and will be so at all times. This fact, however, cannot be overlooked and denied that there is today a clear struggle for supremacy and power between the two types of society or state—individualistic-minded, or we may say democratic, and communistic or authoritarian.

II

In India also, much stress has been laid on the individuality of man. The Indian philosophy, specially the Vedānta, recognizes the greatness of each individual soul and stresses the need of the development of individuality. But this is somewhat different from what we said about individualism earlier. Here the concept of individuality has a spiritual backing and it is this that makes the difference. The glory, the power, and the potential divinity of each individual are stressed through and through in the Hindu scriptures. The individual, the Upaniṣads hold, is in essence none else than the supreme Self. But this individual is not the little self that we commonly understand by our individuality. It is not the puny, thirsty, hungry, self-seeking individuality that, in the midst of ignorance of its own nature, only tries to rob others to sustain the bundle of nerves and the lump of flesh that deceptively present themselves as the individual self. 'Here I stand,' says Swami Vivekananda, 'and if I shut my eyes and try to conceive my existence, "I", "I", "I"—what is the idea before me? The idea of a body. Am I then nothing but a combination of material substances? The Vedas declare "No". I am a spirit living in a body. I am not the body.' The realization of this consciousness and the manifestation of the individual spiritual content—which is really the same with the universal unity that is the only truth—is the end and aim of all Indian social, ethical, and religious systems. The ideal is to transcend the limits of ego-centric sphere and enter gradually the vast and limitless realm of universal thought and cosmic unity. The whole of Hindu sociology is based on the concept of elevation of the individual by and by from a lower existence to a higher one, ultimately to reach the core of that unity—when lower and higher, evil and good, you and me disappear and the blessed experience of non-dual entity fills the entire being of the individual—nay where the individual loses his isolated existence in the Universal—which is one without a second. It is this reading of Indian system of society which enabled Swami Vivekananda to declare that 'the national ideals of India are renunciation and service'—renunciation and sacrifice of the lower ideals and smaller good for higher ideals and better good. The idea is very common and popular among the Hindus that one has to sacrifice the individual for the family, the family for the community, the community for the country, and the country for the world, and the whole world for the soul. The Hindu social orders and systems of ethics are made subservient to the demands of the spirit. Swami Vivekananda, on the concept of this aspect of our social philosophy, emphatically says: 'Oh India! ... Forget not that thy marriage, thy wealth, thy life, are not for sense pleasure, are not for thy individual personal happiness; forget not that thou art born as a sacrifice to the Mother's altar, forget not that thy social order is but the reflex of the Universal Mother; forget not that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers.'

III

But, in spite of the fact that we in India have backed the principle of individualism through a higher spiritual outlook, where individualism gets a wider scope to merge into universalism for its fulfilment, the fact has remained that too much of individual thinking has led to a serious lack of the element of organization in us. What is to be done then? Should the concept of individualism—a concept traditionally supported by the Indian scriptures and philosophies—be abandoned? We do not think it is necessary.

The course open to us at this critical period of the conflicting tendencies of modern times and national emergency is not only to keep close to our age-long traditions of individualism peculiar to the genius and talent of Indian culture, but at the same time, to adapt ourselves to the new environments by assimilating the good points of the Western organizational strength. These good points are concerted action for a noble cause, the co-ordination of wills for the same, and the power of organized efforts at the same time to ensure the full freedom and development of the individual, both secular and spiritual. The social, and also the political structure should be such as to create such conditions in which, to quote Prof. Joad again, 'the individual can pursue absolute values, ... where its members more clearly apprehend the values of truth, moral virtue, beauty, and happiness, and embody them more fully in their lives'.

'Two of these values, namely, those of moral virtue and happiness are, however, pursued and realized in the service of the community. We must add, then, that a good community is one which offers its citizens opportunities for the development of their personalities and the realization of these absolute values in its service.' A successful democracy is that system of government 'under which every citizen has an opportunity of participating, through discussion, in an attempt to reach voluntary agreement as to what shall be done for the good of the whole ... while not forgetting that the true end of the state must be sought in the lives of the individuals.'

Fortunately, India is pledged to such a system of government and social order. The present national trends are towards establishing that ideal type of democratic society where every individual shall enjoy the utmost liberty and four freedoms—the freedom of thought, the freedom of speech, the freedom of action and the freedom of worship—and all these for the supreme freedom of one's spiritual development. And the Indian genius is very much suited to this type of social order.

The ancient institutions of caste, village community, and joint family were based on this principle of mutual co-operation of the individual and the society. The good of one is inseparably bound with the good of the other. These systems have, no doubt, been seriously affected these days by so many factors of modern civilization based on the principles of natural selection and survival of the fittest—i.e. competition. They have, thus, ceased to serve the useful purpose that they did before. It is now the duty of the Indians to reform and adapt them to their present-day needs. This is only possible if we can give up our undesirable attitude of drifting and despair and seriously organize ourselves in the work of regenerating our good and noble institutions. Social and national drawbacks and shortcomings can hardly be removed by the effort of only a few. It is wrong to think that things will right themselves in their own way without the concerted action and united strength of the individuals who form the nation. We must be good, honest, hardworking, and sacrificing individuals, fused together into an organized effort for national welfare. 'To make a great future India,' Swami Vivekananda said about sixty years ago, 'the whole secret lies in organization, accumulation of power, co-ordination of wills. Already before my mind rises one of the marvellous verses of the Atharva-Veda

Saṁhitā which says, "Be thou all of one mind, be thou all of one thought, for in the days of yore, the gods being of one mind were enabled to receive oblations. That the gods can be worshipped by men is because they are of one mind". Being of one mind is the secret of society. And the more you go on fighting and quarrelling about all trivialities . . . , the further you are off from that accumulation of energy and power which is going to make the future India. For mark you, the future of India depends entirely upon that. This is the secret—accumulation of will-power, co-ordination, bringing them all, as it were, into one focus.'

We Indians, therefore, standing as we are on the threshhold of a new era in our national life, consequent on the attainment of our long-cherished political freedom, and with various plans and projects before us, have to look to our glorious past to draw inspiration from the genius of the race, and at the same time, keeping in tune with the march of civilization, we have to face the present with courage and confidence to plan for a great future life-order, where the individual and the society will be an integrated whole—offering the best to a man to develop his individuality economically, politically, and spiritually and where the individual will look upon the society as the reflex of the infinite universal Mother, and shall be ever ready to sacrifice his all for the good and greatness of the society.

THE VIVEKANANDA ROCK

[CONTRIBUTED]

About 200 yards south-east of the Kanyakumari temple in South India, off the shore, there are two rocks very close to each other in the shallow sea. The rocks together are now known as the Vivekananda Rock, their old name being Śrīvelipāra. The census report of 1951 (Trivandrum District Census Handbook 'C' Gazetteer) says: 'Among the rocks lying off the shore, is the Vivekananda Rock so called because, towards the end of 1892, the Swami came to the Cape and was so fascinated by the place that he swam to the rock and sat there in meditation for a time. It is said that he looked northwards at the great land and its teeming millions, and resolved to dedicate himself to the service of his country and spread the message of Vedanta to the West.' In the *Life of Swami Vivekananda* by his Eastern and Western disciples, this event, which marked, as it were, the beginning of a new chapter in Swamiji's life, and the nation's history, is described thus:

'The Swami next journeyed on to Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin), the southernmost extremity of India. Now was finished that great pilgrimage which extends northwards to those distant snow-clad regions where the Himalayas pass into Tibet. He thought of the sacredness of India and of the deep, deep spiritual life of which Badarikashrama and Kanyakumari were the towering landmarks. He was eager as a child to see the Mother; reaching the shrine he fell prostrate in ecstasy before Her image. Worship finished, he crossed to a rock which was separate from the mainland. About him the ocean tossed and stormed, but in his mind there was even a greater tempest. And there, sitting on the last stone of India, he passed into a deep meditation upon the present and future of his country. He sought for the root of her downfall, and with the vision of a seer he understood why India had been thrown down from the pinnacle of glory to the depths of degradation. The simple monk was transformed into a great reformer, a great organizer, and a great master-builder of the nation. . . .

'Ay, here at Kanyakumari was the culmination of days and days of thought on the problems of the Indian masses; here was the culmination of hours of longing that the wrongs of the masses might be righted. His eyes looked through a mist of tears across the great waters. His heart went out to the Master and to the Mother in a great prayer. From this moment, his life was consecrated to the service of India, but particularly to the outcast Nārāyaṇas, to the starving Nārāyaṇas, to the millions of oppressed Nārāyaṇas of his land. To him, in this wonderful hour, even the final vision of Brahman in the *nirvikalpa samādhi* and the bliss thereof became subservient to the overwhelming desire to give himself utterly and entirely for the good of the Indian people. And his soul was caught up in an ecstasy of vision of the Nārāyaṇa Himself—the Supreme Lord of the universe, whose love is boundless, whose pity knows no distinction between the high and the low, the pure and the vile, the rich and the poor. To him religion was no longer an isolated province of human endeavour; it embraced the whole scheme of things not only the *dharma*, the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the meditation of sages, the asceticism of great monks, the vision of the Most High, but the heart of the people, their lives, their hopes, their misery, their poverty, their degradation, their sorrows, their woes. And he saw that the *dharma*, and even the Vedas, without the people, were as so much straw in the eyes of the Most High. Verily, at Kanyakumari the Swami was the Patriot and Prophet in one!' (first edition: 1912).

Thus, historically, this rock symbolizes an important event in the renaissance of India, for here one of her greatest sons decided upon the course of action he was to take so as to raise his motherland from the morass in which she was unfortunately plunged during one of the darkest periods of her history. This rock is a symbol, so to say, for the Indian people, of their national aspirations and of the vitality that rejuvenates their country and culture again and again to rise to the needs of the time, and play her proper part in the affairs of mankind. Naturally, therefore, this rock which was sanctified by the holy touch of the great Swami and by his deep fruitful meditation on it, has been a place of adoration and importance to the people of India, specially to the Hindus.

Hence it was quite in the fitness of things that the Kanyakumari Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Celebrations Committee, in co-ordination with the Central Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Committee, made a proposal about a year back to put up on this rock a suitable memorial to the illustrious Swami during his birth centenary which commenced on the 17th January 1963. It was decided that, among other things, a statue of Swamiji should be placed on the said rock where he sat in meditation, and the rock should be connected to the shore by a causeway. The Kanyākumāri Devoswom Board (temple authorities), under whose jurisdiction the rock lies and who observe the annual function of *Kārtikadīpam* day with *pūjā* and lighting of lamps at the *abhiṣekapīṭham* (spot for ceremonial worship) there, had approved the idea. Accordingly, an all-India appeal was made for the needed funds, and the response, we learn, had been very heartening.

But in the meantime, while preparations for the intended memorial were going on, a few persons, said to be local Catholic fishermen, planted a cross on the rock in the midnight of April 4, 1962. A claim was also made simultaneously that the rock in question belonged to the Christians as, according to hearsay evidence, St. Xavier, when he visited the Cape, had taken shelter on the rock. The Kanyakumari Centenary Committee and the local Hindus were naturally perturbed at this unwarranted action of the Catholic fishermen. So they made a representation to the concerned authorities who fully enquired into the matter. The District Revenue Officer himself visited the place and, as reported, it was agreed, in consultation with the local clergymen, who denied any knowledge about the planting of the cross on the rock and regretted the incident, that the cross would be removed and the centenary committee could proceed with its plans. Accordingly, on the 17th January 1963, the auspicious hundredth birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, on which date started the world-wide birth centenary celebrations of the Swami, a marble tablet with suitable inscription was fixed on the rock as the initial step towards the proposed memorial.

But the trouble-makers were not at rest; one night, a few months ago, they surreptitiously crossed to the rock, reportedly desecrated the marble tablet, and threw it into the ocean. The people's feeling was roused that such a thing should have been allowed to happen, and the Madras Government was again informed of the unwelcome occurrence. But, strange to say, by this time the State government had come to be in two minds. We do not know what pressures, if any, brought about this change in their attitude. They are, it is said, now wavering in the matter. The *Organiser* of Delhi, in its issue dated July 22, 1963, reports: 'Would you believe it, the Government of Madras is unwilling to permit the erection of Swami Vivekananda's statue at the Vivekananda Rock, Kanyakumari, because it is afraid it might not be able to protect the off-shore memorial against the "vandalism of Christian fanatics"?'

The report further says that a deputation led by Dewan Anand Kumar (former Vice-Chancellor of Punjab University) and others, including Barrister N. C. Chatterjee, Lala Hansraj Gupta, and Sri A. K. Jain, met the Hon'ble Minister for Hindu Endowments, Madras Government, and discussed with him the whole matter. But it adds that the Madras Government is now unwilling to permit the proposed memorial on the rock itself and 'has been pressing the committee (the centenary committee) to agree to setting up the statue on the shore itself "where it would be well protected".'

All this brings certain thoughts uppermost in our mind. Being the most tolerant people, the Hindus, who form eighty-five per cent of the Indian nationals, are happy when they see their brethren of the minority communities in India enjoying full freedom to follow their own respective religions in peace. Nay, if there were any restrictions regarding it, the Hindus, by their very constitution and nature, would be the first people to protest against them. As Swami Vivekananda has said, 'It is here (in India) and here alone that the Hindus build mosques for the Mohammedans and churches for the Christians'. The Hindus have held an Akbar or a St. Xavier with all respect and love due to them. But does it mean that the minority communities should abuse this freedom and tread upon the legitimate rights and sentiments of the majority community. And suppose they do so due to some reason best known to them, should the government be a party to it?

Again, the rock referred to above need not be an object of adoration only to the Hindus. For here it is associated with the sacred memory of one who, because he was a Hindu of the highest order, did not think in the narrow terms of caste or creed or colour. He declared, 'I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother', and was not content with the laying down of one precious life of his for his countrymen. He prayed: 'May I be born again and again and suffer thousands of miseries so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum total of all souls.' Indeed, are not the Christians and others in this country also Indians, and do they not come within the 'sum total of all souls'? Should they not feel happy to show respect to one who unmistakably believed in the harmony of all religions and who, though justly proud of being a Hindu, could dare to say in his characteristic catholicity: 'Our salutations go to all the past Prophets whose teachings and lives we have inherited, whatever might have been their race, clime, or creed! Our salutations go to all those Godlike men and women who are working to help humanity, whatever be their birth, colour, or race!'? It was Swami Vivekananda who, speaking with the foresight of a seer at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, declared: 'Holiness, purity, and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and ... every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: "Help and not Fight", "Assimilation and not Destruction", "Harmony and peace and not Dissension".'

Telling about an occasion which reflects the deep veneration the Swami had for the Son of Man, Romain Rolland, the great French savant, writes: 'He crowned his stay in Europe by a short journey through Italy. He went to salute da Vinci's *Last Supper* at Milan, and was especially moved by Rome. ... He was profoundly touched by the memories of the first Christians and martyrs in the Catacombs, and shared the tender veneration of the Italian people for the figures of the infant Christ and the Virgin Mother. They never ceased to dwell in his thought. ... When he was in Switzerland he came to a little chapel in the mountains. Having plucked flowers he placed them at the feet of the Virgin through the hands of Mrs. Sevier, saying: "She also is the Mother." One of his disciples had later the strange idea to give him an image of the Sistine Madonna to bless, but he refused in all humility, and piously touching the feet of the Child, he said: "I would have washed his feet, not with my tears, but with my heart's blood." It may indeed with truth be said that there was no other being so close as he to the Christ.'

Swami Vivekananda, like all the true Prophets, was much above the narrow conceptions of race or religion, a fact which has been acknowledged by many Christians who flocked to hear him when he spoke before them in the West. Today, too, many Christians assemble during this centenary year to offer him their tributes of love and respect in congregations and meetings that are being held not only all over India but also in many towns and cities of Asia, Europe, and America. Is it not, then, an irony of circumstances that when the different communities of the world are vying with one another in demonstrating their deep regard to this great teacher of mankind, a section of the Christians in India should be so small-minded as to stand in the way of perpetuating his illustrious memory? Is it not sacrilegious to the memory of one who unequivocally pronounced: 'I accept all religions. ... I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammedans; I shall enter the Christian's church and kneel before the crucifix; I shall enter the Buddhistic temple, where I shall take refuge in Buddha and in his Law'? We expect that these people, who are unfortunately misguided at the moment, will come to reason and see light. If, however, they are really so perverted as to refuse to open their eyes, should the others, the liberal people and the government, put up with such audacious atrocity and remain silent spectators, just because this country professes to be a democratic secular state?

We earnestly hope that the whole matter will be assessed rightly, and the Vivekananda Memorial will in time come up on the rock itself to prove to posterity that the just and rightful efforts of the many in a noble cause cannot be hampered and nullified by the machinations of a misled few.

MEANING OF ADVAITA ACCORDING TO VIJNANA BHIKṢU

By Dr. Anima Sen Gupta

Vijñāna Bhikṣu who belonged to the latter part of the sixteenth century A.D. wrote a commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa. His object was to bring Brahma-Sūtra into a harmonious relation with all the orthodox systems of ancient Indian philosophy, because in his opinion, real antagonism exists between orthodox systems and heterodox systems only. One orthodox system is in no way radically opposed to another orthodox system.

Being a philosopher of a true synthetic outlook, he had also tried to prove that the roots of all orthodox systems could be traced to the Upaniṣads. So far as the Sāṅkhya philosophy was concerned, he primarily tried to prove that the said system was not atheistic. The Sāṅkhya philosophy, too, could be based on the *Brahma-Sūtra* and could be brought in line with the Advaita philosophy. In his opinion, the word *'advaita'* has not been used in its proper sense by Śaṅkara, as a result of which a false gulf has been created between the Sāṅkhya and the Vedānta philosophy. If the word *'advaita'* could be used in its right sense, then there would not have been any difficulty in comprehending fully the harmony between the Sāṅkhya-Yoga and the Vedānta philosophy.

According to Vijñāna Bhikṣu, the word *'advaita'* does not imply the absolute non-difference between the individual soul and Brahman; nor does it assert the unreality of the *Jīvas*. He has used the word *'advaita'* to mean *avibhāga*, or non-separableness between Brahman and the individual soul. Like Rāmānuja, he has also admitted the reality of the three *tattvas*—Prakṛti, Puruṣa, and God. Prakṛti is the unconscious dynamic principle and Puruṣa is the static principle of pure consciousness; both of them are brought together by God as a result of which the creative disturbance of the three *guṇas* takes place in the bosom of Nature immediately (*asmābhistu prakṛtipuruṣasamyoga Iśvareṇa kriyate*, I.1.2.)

According to dualistic and atheistic Sāṅkhya, Prakṛti is independent and its dynamism is due to its own nature. According to Bhikṣu, however, cosmology is a cosmic history of Puruṣa and Prakṛti which are brought together for creative purposes by God. Puruṣa and Prakṛti are independent of each other, but they are to act jointly for the creation of a purposeful world. The joining together of spirit and matter is possible, only because both of them rest on a common substratum, i.e. God.

It is clear from the writings of Bhikṣu that he is not at all in favour of accepting a single differenceless Brahman as the sole reality; nor is he in favour of admitting this world as a play of two wholly independent principles, like spirit and matter of any dualistic system. In his opinion, an unconscious principle cannot, of its own accord, enter into an effective and creative relation with Pure Consciousness. This must be done by a spiritual being higher than both Puruṣa and Prakṛti. The greatness of God and the littleness of both man and the world do not suggest a theory of absolute non-dualism; on the other hand, the very conception of God as the substratum of both man and the world prevents us from imagining a separable relationship between God and either of the two *tattvas*, i.e. spirit and matter. The creative process in Nature begins at the will of God. Prakṛti has no independent teleological power by dint of which it can move and change of its own accord. Both Prakṛti and Puruṣa are energies of God and, as such, they have no existence apart from Him. Prakṛti is the changeable stuff of the universe. Puruṣa is the ground of all sorts of world-experience (*bhogāśraya*), and God is the ultimate substratum of both Puruṣa and Prakṛti. Both Puruṣa and Prakṛti remain indistinguishably merged in God prior to creation, and this indistinguishable union of the three *tattvas* is what has been described as '*advaita*' in the Upaniṣads. God, according to Bhikṣu, is the substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*) of Puruṣa and Prakṛti, the material and the efficient cause of the world, the *sākṣin* of all and is also the *amśin* of which the individual self is the *amśa*. In each of these aspects, the relation of '*avibhāga*' holds true between God and the other two *tattvas*, and this sense of *avibhāga* is the proper sense in which the Advaita Śruti texts should be understood.

GOD AS THE ADHIṢṬHĀNA-KĀRAṆA

According to Bhikṣu, *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa* (substratum) is that which, by remaining inseparably related (*avibhaktam*) to the real and changeable material cause, prompts the latter to create the cosmic order.[1] The *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa* is also that in which all things remain in a non-manifested, subtle condition (*yasmin layam yāti*) at the time of dissolution. Both these characteristics belong to God only and not to any other being. Further, He is also the ultimate Being into which the individual souls enter in the state of final realization. The goal is '*sāyujya*' and not '*aikya*' with Brahman. In whatever way God is looked at, there is always this relation of inseparability (*avibhāga*) between Him and Puruṣa and Prakṛti.

Although God is the *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa*, and in this sense, is also called the original cause, still His causality is not to be understood in the ordinary sense of the causality of a modifiable principle.

God is the unmodifiable principle of pure consciousness which vitalizes Prakṛti by His presence as the only witnessing self of the pre-evolutionary stage. Prakṛti, in its essence is pure potentiality which can evolve into definite categories of the world only through its relation with the Puruṣa. This association between Puruṣa and Prakṛti or pure potentiality and consciousness is possible due to the presence of Divine Consciousness which shines in its full glory through the three stages of creation, preservation, and dissolution of the world. The conception of God as the vitalizing principle of the modifiable stuff of the world is also present in the philosophy of Śaṅkara. God in the Śaṅkara-Vedānta is Brahman reflected in Māyā and it is due to the reflection of consciousness in Māyā that the blind *upādhi* of God changes at once into an active potentiality of a meaningful creation. Brahman dissociated from Māyā is simply the differenceless and static consciousness. God of Bhikṣu is pure consciousness associated with *śuddha-sattva* which is His *nitya-upādhi*. God is able to think or will through the instrument of *śuddha-sattva* alone. In His true nature, God is only pure consciousness devoid of all forms of agency.

Like Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, Bhikṣu, too, has ascribed the power of vitalizing the material stuff of the world to God, but while Rāmānuja has admitted this power as an *aiśvarya* of the highest Being, and Śaṅkara has described it as phenomenal and false from the transcendental point of view, Bhikṣu has sought an intermediate position between the two. In essence, his God is devoid of all qualities and power which actually belong to His *upādhi*; but since His *upādhi* is eternal, all qualities and powers are always ascribable to Him.

GOD AS THE MATERIAL AND THE EFFICIENT CAUSE

Since God is the substratum of the modifiable stuff of the world, God is also called the material cause (*upādāna kāraṇa*) of the word. The word '*upādāna*' has, however, been used here in a sense which is entirely different from the sense in which modifiable Prakṛti is the *upādāna* of the world. Since the foundational principle cannot be separated from that of which it is the foundation,

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[1] *Vijñāmṛta-bhāṣya*, I.1.2, Chowkhamba Publications, p. 32.

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God cannot be separated from the world. The real modifiable stuff of the world is Prakṛti, but God as the substratum of both Prakṛti and the world has been described as the *upādāna-kāraṇa* of the world (*vikārikāraṇavāda-adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇasyāpyupādānatvavyavahārāt*). Where non-separableness between the cause and the effect is due to the relation of inherence, there the cause is a changeable one; but the cause is simply the unmodifiable substratum of the effect where, though non-separable from the effect, it is still not related to it by the relation of inherences. *Ākāśa* is the *upādāna-kāraṇa* of the air only in the sense of its unmodifiable and inseparable substratum. The real modifiable cause of the air is *sparśa-tanmātra*. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophers have described this type of causality as the efficient causality of God. According to Bhikṣu, however, this *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇatva* of God is different from *nimitta-kāraṇatva* since, in the latter case, the efficient cause can be separated from the effect. The foundational principle, on the other hand, can never be separated from the effect that is grounded on it. So Bhikṣu has mentioned four forms of causes: (1) *samavāyī*, (2) *asamavāyī*, (3) *nimitta-kāraṇa*, and (4) *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa*.

When God is spoken of as the efficient cause of the world, then also, the efficient causality of God refers simply to His witnessing character (*sūryavat sākṣitāmātreṇa jñāna-dvāraiva nimitta-kāraṇam Brahma*). The *sūtra* '*Janmādyasya yataḥ*' refers to God as the unmodifiable and inseparable substratum, and it is only in this sense that the epithet of material causality has been ascribed to Him. In Himself God is only pure, static consciousness, but since it is never separated from its *upādhi* in the form of *śuddha-sattva*, the agency, activity, etc. which belong to the *upādhi* are also attributed to God. Here, God is not the unmodifiable ground of falsehood or appearance as has been admitted by Śaṅkara. On the contrary, He is the unmodified substratum of a real world that has been evolved from a real changeable cause in the form of Prakṛti. At the time of dissolution, Prakṛti ceases to have any activity and it also becomes subtle and indistinguishable from God. This is the meaning of *prakṛtilaya*: Prakṛti, the real cause of a real world, is never destroyed. Puruṣa, too, in this state, withdraws all its epistemological activities and this inoperative state of Puruṣa is what is meant by the mergence of Puruṣa in God. These facts show that during the state of dissolution, God remains inseparable and indistinguishable from Puruṣa and Prakṛti. This indistinguishable union of the three *tattvas* is what is described in the Śruti as '*advaita*'.

Again, when one soul is liberated, other souls remain in a bound condition. So, Prakṛti remains in existence and continues to work for the benefit of the bound souls. The activities of Prakṛti come to an end in respect of the released soul only. That particular Prakṛti which is meant solely for the enjoyment of the soul that has been released, becomes very subtle and gets merged in its substratum (i.e. God). The released soul also enters into God and remains indistinguishable from Him. Hence in the state of release too there is *advaita* or the relation of *avibhāga* between the three *tattvas*.

GOD AS THE WITNESSING CONSCIOUSNESS

According to Bhikṣu, God is to be regarded as the prime witnessing consciousness, since prior to creation, there remains no other principle which can possess the attribute of *sākṣitva*. Unless this *sākṣitva* is attributed to God who is the sole principle of revelation in the pre-evolutionary stage, creation of the world cannot be explained.

GOD AS AMŚIN AND THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL AS THE AMŚA OF HIM

Since God is the primary principle of consciousness, He has been described by Bhikṣu as the *amśin* from whom the individual souls are derived as so many sparks from a single fire.

Like sparks, they too resemble God in so far as they are of the nature of consciousness. Although the souls have separate being, still they have no separate and independent existence of their own. Both Puruṣa and Prakṛti exist in God who brings them together at the time of creation. God, as the supreme principle, shoulders the sole responsibility for the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the world. *Aṁśatva* implies truly the *sajātīyatva* of God and also the inseparableness of the individual soul from God. The words '*sampat*', '*laya*', etc., too, mean nothing but non-separableness (*avibhāga*). The objection that partless Brahman cannot have parts is not sound, since in actual life, the son is always regarded as a part of the father. There is also *avibhāga* between the father and the son in the sense that the son will always remain related to his father by the relation of sonship throughout the whole period of his existence. The two together will constitute a single family unit, in spite of their having separate beings of their own.[2] It is because the individual is a part of God only in the sense in which the son is a part of the father that there is no difficulty in admitting the soul, too, as *vibhu*. When the infinite soul manifests itself through its *upādhi*, it appears as finite and limited.

From the above discussions, it can be reasonably held that according to Bhikṣu, the word '*advaita*' has been used in the Śruti texts with a view to proclaiming clearly that both Puruṣa and Prakṛti rest solely and wholly on Brahman which is their *adhiṣṭhāna* or the ground-principle. In the absence of this *sadādhiṣṭhāna,* the co-operation of two principles having separate *sattā* and separate *sthiti* cannot be logically explained.

Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja have also admitted Brahman as the *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa,* but the sense in which Bhikṣu has spoken of Brahman as the *adhiṣṭhāna* is different from that of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. According to Śaṅkara, Brahman is only the *adhiṣṭhāna* of illusion. It is not the substratum of any metaphysically real power. In Rāmānuja, on the other hand, we find that Brahman is the *adhiṣṭhāna-kāraṇa* of *cit* and *acit* both of which are regulated, controlled, and guided by this highest Reality. Just as the car driver is the ruler of the car, in the same manner, Brahman is the ruler of both *cit* and *acit*. In the opinion of Bhikṣu, however, it is only as the primary foundational principle of revelation that Brahman is regarded as the sole substratum of all things and beings of the world. All powers and glories really belong to *śuddha-sattva* which is the *nitya-upādhi* of the ultimate Reality.

In fact, Bhikṣu has not made any distinction, like Śaṅkara, between Saguṇa Brahman and Nirguṇa Brahman as belonging to two different levels of existence and reality. In his opinion, although Brahman, in essence, is pure and *nirguṇa,* yet being eternally associated with the adjunct in the form of *śuddha-sattva* in which *viśvākāra-vṛtti* is eternally present, the highest Being assumes for all time the role of a revealer and manifests the *sāttvika-vṛtti* of the world-form by His own light. Thus, according to Bhikṣu, Brahman and Īśvara do not belong to two different levels of reality. The representation of Brahman as God is not a concession to the weakness of the ignorant mind. Both are equally real. When Brahman is thought of apart from the *upādhi,* the highest Reality is *nirguṇa* and when it is thought of along with its *upādhi* which comprises powers and glories, Brahman is legitimately described as the omnipotent God. Brahman, in the philosophy of Rāmānuja, however, is always a qualified one and is the ruler and supervisor of the whole universe.

Further, the word *avibhāga* used by Bhikṣu to mean *advaita* has a connotation slightly different from the connotation of the expression '*apṛthaksiddhi*' used by Rāmānuja in his philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita. Of course, the word *apṛthaksiddhi* or inseparableness has been used by Rāmānuja in his philosophy with a view to explaining the organic unity of the three *tattvas—cit, acit* and Īśvara; but this inseparableness (existing between *cit, acit,* and Īśvara) is, in his opinion, identical with the inseparable relation existing between the body and the soul of a living being. Here, if one wishes, one can perceive soul and body as different, although from the practical point of view, the soul and the body are generally treated as one. The oneness or unity established between *cit, acit,* and Īśvara by the body-soul relation exists in the same manner in both the unmanifested and manifested conditions of the world. Even in the state of release, this unity continues to hold good from the standpoint of the Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy. According to Bhikṣu, however, the unity created by *avibhāga* exists only in the unmanifested condition, when Brahman alone is felt and the other two *tattvas* (Puruṣa and Prakṛti), being devoid of their activities, remain merged in the supreme Reality. In the manifested condition, the relation between Brahman and the two other *tattvas* is not like the relation of an indistinguishable union created by throwing the water of a jar in a pond; on the other hand, the relation of *avibhāga* then resembles the relation of inseparableness existing between the father and his son as both of them constitute one family unit.

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[2] *Ibid.,* p. 52.

Here it can be pointed out very cogently that non-difference or oneness existing between the father and the son is less prominent than the non-difference which is admitted to exist between the body and the soul from the practical point of view. The father and the son possess different bodies and their experiences of pleasures and pains are also different. So, from this point of view, Bhikṣu's explanation of *advaita* in the manifested condition of the world is not very satisfying.

In fact, Bhikṣu has introduced God in his philosophy simply as a static principle of revelation. He is not the real creator, preserver, and destroyer of the world. All activities, all thoughts, and all feelings belong to His *prakṛti-mūlaka-upādhi* only. Hence although Prakṛti has been assigned a subordinate status, still because of the essentially inactive nature of Bhikṣu's Brahman, the independence of Prakṛti has been maintained to a very great extent in his philosophy. God is only the *sākṣin*, a mere revealing principle. The vitalization of pure potentiality by consciousness is necessary even in the pre-evolutionary stage and so God has been introduced in the philosophy of Bhikṣu primarily with a view to satisfying this very essential need. In his opinion, it is not proper to describe the philosophy of Sāṅkhya in an atheistic manner, because in the pre-evolutionary stage, it is the consciousness of God alone that can account for the intelligization of the unconscious potentiality of Prakṛti for the creation of this world, which is the moral stage for the spiritual development of so many individual souls.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: HIS LIFE AND CONTRIBUTION

By Dr. P. Nāgaraja Rao

All over the world the birth centenary celebration of Swami Vivekananda—the radiant monk and the cyclonic Hindu—is being conducted with great joy and sincere thanksgiving. He represents the best that is in the Eastern wisdom combined with modern knowledge. He is in the royal line of the great tradition of India's spiritual savants who have lighted the path for humanity.

The times in which Swami Vivekananda lived experienced a renaissance of the Spirit. The effect of European thought and ideas on the life of Indians was far reaching. English education produced different reactions in the minds of the Indian people. The orthodox sections kept their Vedic heritage sealed with themselves and did not learn the English language or allow modern ideas to influence them. In their frantic effort to preserve their ancient tradition, they petrified it. People in another section, on the other hand, were very much fascinated by the Western ways and views of life, and adopted them blindly. These people declared that to be Indian was to be uncivilized. They regarded everything Eastern as useless. There was a third section of people who were wise and had the power of discrimination and were rooted in Indian culture. They did not blindly swallow all that the West gave them. They were fascinated by the West, but not subjugated. They were shaken, but not shattered. They faced the challenge to the religion and spirituality of India, posed, not only by modern science and secular thought, but also by the insistent and many-faced Christian missionary propaganda. There were several renascent movements to modernize Hinduism. The most prominent among them was the Brahmo Samaj. It sought to fight the social evils of the age and stuck to the religion of the Upaniṣads and the worship of an impersonal Godhead. Keshab Chandra Sen and Maharshi Devendranath Tagore were its leaders.

During his boyhood, Narendranath (Swami Vivekananda's pre-monastic name) used to attend the meetings of the Brahmo Samaj. He had an acute sceptical mind which never could surrender claims of reason, and which hated superstition and irrational faith. He had read Hume, Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, and other Western thinkers. There was another deep aspect of his personality—his irrepressible devotion to the spiritual ideal and his fearless spirit of dedication. His faith in the supremacy of reason and his yearning for spiritual realization were at war till he found his *guru*. The modern religious movements of the time were not so deeply rooted in the cultural heritage of the land. They were mostly a sort of compromise between the East and the West, and were somewhat apologetic about their stand. None of them had authentic experience as the basis of their doctrines. This did not satisfy Vivekananda's deep spiritual urge. He was in search of someone who, on the strength of his own realization, could satisfy his spiritual yearnings. In this context, Naren came to know about Sri Ramakrishna from one of his relations and from Professor Hastie, who were admirers of Sri Ramakrishna. Professor Hastie of the Scottish Church College, Calcutta, was teaching Wordsworth's poem, *The Excursion*. He lighted upon a passage describing the mystic mood:

In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God
Thought was not, in enjoyment it expired
No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request
Rapt into still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise
His mind was a thanksgiving to the power
That made him: it was blessedness and love.

The students, among them Naren, too, did not understand what this passage meant. The Professor said: 'Such an experience is the result of the purity of mind and concentration on some object. I have seen only one person who has experienced this state of mind and he is Ramakrishna Paramahamsa of Dakshineshwar. You can understand this if you can go and see him.' Thus Narendranath was brought to his future *guru*.

The master-pupil relation—specially in the spiritual world—is a unique thing. Seeking the spiritual preceptor is not an act of convention, nor is it a mere blind formality. It is a part of all the great and sound spiritual traditions in the East and the West. The Sanskrit word *guru* means the dispeller of darkness. It is the living voice that transmits knowledge. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* declares: 'He who has the *guru* knows.' Independent self-study of the scriptures does not give, even to a very intelligent man, spiritual illumination. The scriptural truths glow with meaning only when lighted by the teaching of the *guru*. Suso, the Western mystic, writes: 'The knowledge of the Divine comes through the living word of a living person, for the word on the parchment or in the book is lifeless.' Śaṅkara, in the very first verse of his book *Śata-ślokī* describes the *guru* as superior to the alchemist, for the simple reason that the alchemist can only transmute the base metal into gold, but he cannot impart to it the very transmuting power. But this the *guru* does in his disciple and thus surpasses the alchemist. Ramakrishna is the ideal *guru* in this sense. In the history of the spiritual encounters between an aspirant and a master, the encounter of Naren and Ramakrishna is unique. Traditional Vedānta believes in a wisdom which is achieved through instruction, but a worldless wisdom is attained through an awakening that comes on one suddenly. This is what Sri Ramakrishna did for Naren. The real Master waits for the pupil. The first two meetings of Naren with Ramakrishna are memorable and awe-inspiring. They can be described best in Vivekananda's words. He had been to Ramakrishna with a few friends and had sung a song. He writes: 'Well, I sang that song, and then, soon after, he suddenly rose, took me by the hand, and led me out on to the porch north of his room, shutting the door behind him. It was locked from the outside, so we were alone. I thought he was going to give some advice in private. But, to my utter amazement, he began shedding tears of joy—floods of them—as he held my hand, talking to me tenderly, as if to an old friend. "Ah!" he said, "You have come so late! How could you be so unkind—keeping me waiting so long? My ears are almost seared, listening to the talk of the worldly people. Oh; how I have longed to unburden my heart to someone who can understand everything—my innermost experience!" He went on like this, amidst his sobbing. And then he folded his palms and addressed me solemnly: "Lord, I know you. You are Nara, the ancient sage, the incarnation of Nārāyaṇa. You have come to the earth to take away the sorrows of mankind." And so forth. I was absolutely dumbfounded by his behaviour. "Who is this man I have come to see?" I said to myself. "He must be raving mad! Why, I am the son of Visvanath Datta and he dares call me Nara." But I kept quiet and let him go on. Presently he went back into his room and brought me out some sweets and sugar candy and butter; and he fed me with his own hands. I kept telling him, "Please give them to me—I want so share them with my friends", but it was of no use. He would not stop until I had eaten all of them. Then he seized me by the hand and said: "Promise me you will come back here alone." He was so pressing that I had to say yes. Then I went back with him to join my friends.'

This passage brings out the divine mission of Swami Vivekananda. It was not an accident that took him to Ramakrishna. The intellectual in Vivekananda and his sophistications were only on the surface. There was an intuitive capacity in him which did not dismiss the validity of the mystical and spiritual experience. He wanted a certain conviction in ultimate Truth and the immediate realization of the same. During his first meeting, he asked Sri Ramakrishna a question which he had been asking all other saints, 'Have you seen God?', and he obtained a positive answer. The Master had told that he saw Him as he saw the objects around him, only more intensely. And this immediate self-evident .spiritual experience Sri Ramakrishna transmitted to Narendra also.

With this, Narendra had his spiritual rebirth, and he became a *siddha-puruṣa*. The intellectual conviction in him about the existence of God got transformed unto the fullness of experience and he wished to remain for ever in that state. But the Master admonished him: 'For shame! How can you ask such things? I thought you were a vast receptacle of life, and here you wish to stay absorbed in personal joy like an ordinary man! ... This realization will become so natural to you, by the grace of the Mother, that in your normal state, you will realize the one Divinity in all beings; you will do great things in the world; you will bring spiritual consciousness to men, and assuage the misery of the humble and the poor.' Thus he reminded Narendra of his mission.

After Sri Ramakrishna attained *mahāsamādhi* in 1886, Vivekananda felt that the message of the Master should be carried to the four corners of the world and shared by all, and he was consumed by this passion. He held with love the fifteen monastic disciples of his *guru* together. They all lived in a dilapidated house where they installed the ashes of Sri Ramakrishna in a shrine. They renounced the world and took the monastic vow in the traditional fashion. They stood a lot of privation and ridicule. It is on record that they lived on mere boiled rice and salt with some bitter herbs for quite a long time. They owned a set of clothes in common, to be worn by any one who had to go out to the city. It is the undaunted spirit and impregnable will of Swami Vivekananda that bound them fast to their mission. He had wonderful powers of leadership. His love and regard for his Master is best expressed in his words: 'He (Ramakrishna) is the latest and the most perfect—the concentrated embodiment of knowledge, love, and renunciation, catholicity, and the desire to serve mankind. He must have been born in vain who cannot appreciate him! My supreme good fortune is that I am his servant through life after life.' Again: 'The time was ripe for one to be born, who in one body would have the brilliant intellect of Śaṅkara and the wonderfully expansive infinite heart of Caitanya, one who would see in every sect the same spirit working, the same God; one who would see God in every being, one whose heart would weep for the poor, for the weak, for the outcast, for the downtrodden, for everyone in this world, inside and outside India; and at the same time, whose grand brilliant intellect would conceive of such noble thoughts as would harmonize all conflicting sects not only in India, but outside of India and bring a marvellous harmony, the universal religion of head and heart into existence. Such a man was born, and I had the good fortune to sit at his feet for years.'

After the Master's death, Swamiji wandered all over India for over a period of six years. He gained first-hand knowledge of the downtrodden condition of the masses, their hunger, poverty, misery, social disabilities, illiteracy, lack of self-confidence, and loss of the soul. He was deeply touched and a grim determination arose in him to modernize India without making her lose her spiritual soul and unique heritage. Further, he always believed in the mission and greatness of India. His love for India was second only to that for his Master. He felt the greatness of India's philosophy and religion, and believed that India had a message for the world. India, by her exertion and example, can save the world and save herself. He was proud of being an Indian, and called upon all Indians to take pride in their heritage: 'Thou, brave one, behold, take courage, feel proud that thou art an Indian and proudly proclaim: "I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother. The Indian is my life. India's gods and goddesses are my gods. India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure garden of my youth, the sacred heaven, the Varanasi of my old age"; say brother: "The soil of India is my highest heaven, and the good of India is my good".' On another occasion he declared: 'The very dust of India has become holy to me, the very air is now to me holy, it is now my holy land, the place of pilgrimage, the *tīrtha* and I am eagerly waiting for the blessed day when I shall be able to roll myself on the sacred dust of India.'

His love for India, his faith in the greatness of her spirituality knew no bounds. After a long and eventful tour throughout India, he felt sitting on the rock at Kanyakumari, the need to serve and plead the cause of India in all possible ways. He saw two facts clearly and dedicated his entire life and his all to them. He not only saw that India had a 'mission in the modern world as a force for spiritual regeneration, but he also saw that this force could not become effective until the social and economic conditions in India were adequately improved. It was in this context, that he thought he could seek the aid of the United States of America and planned to go there. In the words of Sister Nivedita, Swamiji had a twofold purpose: one world-moving and another nation-building. As for the latter, he was an excellent nation-builder and a true patriot. His nationalism was not narrow, nor cheap or vulgar. He not only loved his country, but wanted to make it lovable. He ceaselessly sought to remedy the shortcomings of the Indian nation; he was hard on her sins and unsparing in his criticism of her faults, though India was always the *puṇyabhūmī* (the holy land) to him. He strove to interpret the East to the West and the West to the East. He realized with Goethe the great truth that 'the Orient and the Occident cannot be separated any longer', and by his own words and actions brought them closer.

On the international field, he pleaded for the fellowship of faiths and mutual tolerance and gave the fundamental tenets of the universal religion which at once satisfies the demands of reason and needs of humanity. His address before the Parliament of Religions, Chicago, on the 11th September 1893, marked out a memorable day in the history of Hinduism. The enormous effect of his speech there was due to two factors: his personality and his transparent sincerity. The success of his speech was not merely due to its intellectual content or its charm. There was the spiritual experience behind it and the utter sincerity of feeling. When Swamiji addressed the audience as 'sisters and brothers', he really felt it; it was not a cheap polished claptrap, nor a formal oratorical phrase, but a deeply felt simple truth. The speech made him the adored of America. He had the pick of the society at his heels and lecture bureaus vied with one another to organize a tour for him. He became overwhelmed with the lavish and sincere love shown by American hospitality to him. In spite of that, his life was exposed to the crudest publicity and was subject to a brutal curiosity which was sickening at times. But he stood this all and preached the Master's message. However, he did not talk much of his *guru*, because he felt that preaching the principles had a more abiding result than preaching the personality. His first tour of America for four years, from 1893 to 1897, and his second in 1899-1900 paved the way for a permanent foothold for Vedānta in the United States, and today, several Vedānta societies are distributed over the face of America.

Swamiji's triumphal return was celebrated all over India and his clarion call to his own people, 'Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached', electrified the whole nation and various movements were set in motion for the regeneration of the country. Vivekananda was a great organizer. He knew that the stability of a work rested on strong organization and sincerity of its workers, and with this end in view, he founded the Ramakrishna Math and Mission at Belur, on the bank of the Gaṅgā. The service this organization, with various branches throughout the country and also in foreign lands, renders is significant and considerable and admirably fulfils the hopes and expectations of its great founder—Swami Vivekananda.

ART AND LIFE

By Sri P. Sama Rao

Art means and includes every creational activity that endures, and the enjoyment of its fruits, too, in the biological, aesthetic, and the spiritual realms of existence. Art has its springs in the Fount of all Life, and follows in the footsteps of the All-Creator. Its volition lies mostly in the close imitation of His melodious forms and shapes sensible to mind and intellect, mundane and supra-mundane.

Purification of personality, as a preparation for the apprehension of the eternal values of life, properly belongs to the domain of metaphysics, while the melodic expression of these values in sensible forms and shapes is the due concern of aesthetics. But the biological element is common to both the domains, for it is the creational activity which results in beauty, physical and non-physical. The true source of art is, however, the synthesis of the physical, intellectual, and emotional activities. The creation through any one of them solely, however perfect it be, is but a partial reflection of the Reality.

The Lord is the embodiment of all beauty, and His creatures are beautiful in the measure they partake of His sweetness (*mādhurya*). For it is the handsome parents who give birth to handsome children, factually and metaphorically. He is the embodiment of the Reality, too, and the best and the most comprehensive representation of this embodiment is only finite and conditioned, while the Reality is infinite and unconditioned. Time and causality do not touch Him at all for He is transcendent, immortal, and eternal. These primary qualities of the Supreme are indescribable. The best concretization of them can only be symbolic and suggestive of His glory. And the concrete symbols which are usually employed to denote His infinite glory are in their very essence finite, and can in no manner be taken to represent the entire Truth.

The Absolute which is qualityless and infinite cannot be the content of an affirmative statement: for every affirmation in positive terms becomes conditioned by definite thought which does not permit of imagination beyond it. But a description by the negative process (*Vide Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*) in its very nature of implication allows free scope for imagination and intuition, and could suggest an infinity of attributes that is verily the characteristic of the Absolute. The abstract, too, in its very nature, is indefinite and unconditioned, while the concrete is definite and conditioned. At best, the concrete could only be suggestive, and thereby, in its maximum efficacy, become symbolic of an abstract quality.

A symbol is a concrete representation of something that is abstract, and therefore, an aid for the transfigurement of the abstract. The highest quality of the concrete symbol is its adequacy, and also its propriety for such a representation. Its efficacy lies in its perfection in setting out as fully as it can the essence of the abstract. At its best, a symbol is only a derivative, and its relation to the original is like that of the synonym to the primal word.

But the symbols are indispensable aids for an interpretation or understanding of the nature of the Infinite. The science of symbolism depends upon arts of association. In this process, only the essentials common to the symbol and the associated are considered. The association becomes the more complete when it establishes a sort of identity between the two.

Words and their seed-syllables, gestures made of limbs, the lightning flashes from eyes, colours, notes of sounds, shapes and forms are all symbols of some quality or other. They denote and suggest something, something more than they factually and literally stand for. The mystic sense of the artist and the *sādhaka* always sees the redoubtable *elan* of the Divine in them.

Om is the sound representative of the Absolute. It is made up of the *sapta-svaras* (*sā, ri, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni*), the seven notes which have each a symphonic form of its own, suggestive of distinct *guṇas*. The uncoloured ray of the sun which, for want of better description, we call the white is composed of *sapta-dhātus* (violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, red); a perfect blend of these sets in each case suggests the Ineffable Supreme in His absoluteness. Light is sound and sound is light. Nowhere is this supreme synthesis so beautifully and yogically expressed as in the *Uttara-Gītā* (V. 40-42): 'The sound that emanates from the *anāhata* gives brith to *dhvani*. *Jyoti* (light) is immanent in *dhvani*. Manas (etherealized mind) is immanent in the *jyoti*. It is only when the mind gets merged with the Absolute (the All-pervading Viṣṇu) that one attains his ultimate Goal.' This is the secret of *nirguṇa-upāsanā* as well as that of the Advaita.

As soon as *jīvas* (selves) embody themselves on the physical plane, they chant the Ajapā-Gāyatrī (*Ham-Saḥ* or *Aham-Saḥ*) with a wail, as it were, yearning for reunion with their Creator. The duly proper lullaby exhorting them to rest and quiet in their physical sojourn on earth, and in the melody of queen Madālasā to her babe, is to wish them 'to become pure, then acquire knowledge of perfect detachment, and thereby acquire strength to escape from the net of the world.'

Intuition is a higher reason with an incomprehensible logic of its own. One cannot determine its form or extent, its depth or nature. All that can be said about it is a surer approach to the Truth than reason, and can more powerfully apprehend it. Intuition varies with its possessor. The diverse mystic experiences of God-filled minds are good instances. No two mystics have felt the Reality perfectly alike. But the essence of their experience has been beatific and one and the same. Intuition may be defined roughly as the subtlest imagination that is neither fantastic nor false, neither conceited nor insolent, but ever open and humble and quite sensitive to record truly the faintest intimations from worlds beyond one's own. Intuition can also be likened to that light that, in its intense flashes, effaces its own form, floods all space with its glow, and discovers the Truth Eternal that lies concealed under phenomenal existence.

Art is a great constructive force. Its enduring qualities always bind the atoms of both the animate and the inanimate together. Art is therefore love, and love we express in thought, and act binds us fast to individuals and to the Supreme. Love is therefore a healthy ingredient of life. True love is always selfless and pure. Art in life and life in art are the two faces of the one and the same medal, the escutcheon, as it were, of all spiritual activity.

Art in love is a patterned approach, a courtship, for the grace of the loved. It is seductive. Love, pure and simple, is always selfless and ennobling. That which so allures and ennobles is both the form and the content of beauty. It is its very essence. This beauty is cohesive in its very nature and is as immanent as God's immanence in creation.

This beauty ties us down to the physical plane with its sensuous, though transient, phenomena of form, tint and sound in the first instance, and then to the non-physical and the spiritual. While effacing all individuality, beauty widens its sphere of action and empowers the self to soar into realms metaphysical and ethereal. It is the bait forged in His own essence and employed by the Master-Angler to draw up the errant fish unto Himself. Works of high art as well as works of saintly conduct are reminiscences of His peerless glory.

It is said that man is cast in the image of his Maker. That is so because man's creativeness, though circumscribed by quality, is no less enspelling as His. The more the human approximates to Him in His essence of beatific quality (*ānanda*), the more enduring would become his works. In other words, his perfection alone can endow him with divine personality, and this divineness alone can ever prompt or achieve for him results of permanent value. *'Devo bhūtvā devam yajet'*—'Having become divine worship the Divine' is a great spiritual injunction. Thus 'playing the sedulous ape' to the Divine is the preliminary step in both adoration and true devotion.

Perfection in art, as elsewhere, is the result truly of an emulation of the Divine. The Absolute is ineffable and unmargined by quality. The colourless ray that symbolizes Him splits into diverse colourful rays and fills space with its own multiple radiance. This is 'Life's dome of many-coloured glass which stains the white radiance of Eternity, till Death tramples it to fragments'. All works of art and virtuous action are arcs of such radiance, vestiges, as it were, left on the way of holy endeavour to reach the Divine.

The means employed to exhibit a conception that is abstract is the technique. It means every attempt made to crystallize the thought by way of expression in no uncertain or dubious terms. Only yogic vision into the essence of things can help to attain clarity. The mind must be pure and serene in order that it duly registers every 'intimation of immortality' from the Supreme and reflects it perfectly in art and conduct.

Every trait and hue, and every note of sound, has each a form of its own symptomatic of the Divine. And each has its own emotive significance. For God is the author of everything. His infinite love knows no regimentation. It flows over both the good and the bad like the sunlight illumining everything. He is form in every form and sweetness in every melody of tint and sound and conduct. He is perfection of every sort. His peerless form is a delineation of only His essential attributes, *Śāntam, Śivam,* and *Sundaram.* Every human act in art or conduct should partake of His essential quality. All high art is therefore hieratic in that it is an emulation of the Divine.

Sketchiness in rendering of form with sharp and broken lines of erratic depth or the bedaubing of surface with imbalanced and meaningless colour masses, or by hellish shrieks joined to serpentine hisses, all in the name of harmony and impressionism, land us nowhere. They amount to caricature of His comliness and glory. This Rabellaisan technique is out of place in art. Cubism, Fauvism, Surrealism, etc. are products of eccentric personality and mental aberration. It is an egoism that kills itself. These tendencies in art are not impersonal, self-annihilating, peaceful, or untramelled. In the effort to enfranchise themselves their protagonists are caught in the toils of their own predilection. Freedom is not libertinism or perseverence in a quality that is doubtful or evanescent.

Perfection knows not itself, yet it is conscious of perfection outside of itself. In its creational activity perfection distils only the essence of things in its works. It envisions permanent values from out of phenomenal existence and embodies them in glamorous shapes and forms. It will not be seduced by externality or appearance. There is divine spark in every bit of creation, and in the transcription of it by the artist in his own work or conduct, he but emulates the Divine.

Technique is the means employed to attain an end. True meditation and due concentration are one and the same; it is perfection in action (*Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*). Perfect technique is consistent with and adequate to the object desired and attained. It is adequate and proper only when it hits off its object in a simple, direct, and sensuous appeal, evoking the same feeling or emotion as that possesed by the object, that is envisioned and materialized. Perfect identification with the essence of the object is the proper approach to an understanding of it. Without such an understanding, there could be no correct delineation or imaging forth of the object. Thus the perfection in creational process is commensurate with the perfection of the creator.

Human perfection, however, is only an approximation to the Divine. Duality is the bedrock of our regard to and kinship with Him. It lasts as long as the adoration of quality—*saguṇa-upāsanā*—endures. All works of art are, therefore, the products of such a relation between the human and the Divine. In a way, as Roger Fry has observed, all art is a blasphemy in that it seeks to delimit the Limitless, and stains the Colourless with the hues of one's own predilection and fancy. There is no end, therefore, to apologies expressed by the highest artists like Śrī Śaṅkara to the Absolute, because the best picturization of the Absolute is imperfect and is not all that could be said of Him. Besides, He is ineffable.

Devotion to one's ideal, like the attachment to one's own kith and kin and acquisitions, is in essence the same as that to the Godhead, from whom they have all proceeded. The only apparent difference is that the love of things in the mundane is usually selfish and influenced by the common equation between the cause and effect, which is enslaving; while the true love to the Godhead is selfless, untramelled, and transcendent. If the latter yearns for anything at all, it is to serve the Godhead in the humble manner as Śrī Hanūmat did, till in the fullness of time he is merged with Him. Duality is, therefore, the phenomenal means that leads to the non-duality of the Absolute (*Advaita*). *Sālokya, sāmīpya, sārūpya* are but the progressive steps to *sāyujya*, the final union.

Art in its highest manifestation is love: for, God is Love and out of love He creates the worlds, maintains them, and destroys them when virtues (*dharma*) fail and sin (*adharma*) engluts them. So art cannot be but love. It is the divinity in him, in whatever measure it be, that inspires the artist to create. Whenever his creations teem with life, he could be deemed to have touched the 'hem of Eternity'.

Life in the blade of grass that spins its rhythm on the air is as precious as the vaunting of kingly glory in mansions. On his deathbed Lao-Kung (famous Chinese artist) was solicited by his devoted disciples, by way of parting message, to answer their question: What that highest purpose may be to which mortal man may aspire? A strange light shot out of Lao-Kung's eyes; he dragged himself to the spot where stood the one picture of the lively blade of grass he had painted and which he loved best. 'It was not merely a blade of grass, for within itself, it contained the spirit of every blade of grass that had ever grown since the beginning of time.' Pointing to this blade of grass, the old man said: 'That is my answer. I have made myself the equal of the gods, for I, too, have touched the hem of Eternity.' As *Agni-Purāṇa* has confirmed, every artist is a *kavir-manīṣī* in his own way; for 'a perfect artist is the unconditioned lord in the infinite realm of creation which bows down to his will'. It is too true to be stressed that the poet is an 'unacknowledged legislator of the world'.

Spiritual success in life is the attainment of godly perfection. The modus may be likened to the process of the sculptor who hacks and hews lively form out of the dead and crude mass of stone or metal. A perfect living is but imaging Him forth in a charming tapestry out of our *guṇas* (qualities) here with our thoughts and acts perfectly designed and executed in selfless dedication of ourselves unto Him.

A work of art is, therefore, a glamorous pattern of life, for 'in every gladness', He is 'the deeper Joy behind' (MacDonald). And the 'true life of man is the knowledge of God' (Westcott). Is it not then true that art in life and life in art are one and the same?

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AT MAYAVATI: A DAY BY DAY RECORD

BY BRAHMACHARI AMAL

Swami Vivekananda visited the Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati in the Himalayas during January 1901. Although it was a short and uneventful visit, yet it is full of interest to the devotees and students of the Ramakrishna movement. Swami Vivekananda travelled much, throughout the whole of India and around the world, but the Himalayas had always a special fascination for him. His dream was to retire to the Himalayas and lose himself in meditation.

And yet his mission was to work and establish a movement for the regeneration of his motherland. He used to say that he often tried to retire in the Himalayas, but that some force, as it were, always pushed him out. But his love for the king of mountains remained in the background of his mind.

This dream of Swamiji was first expressed one day in August 1896, when he was travelling in the Swiss Alps with Capt. Sevier and Mrs. Sevier. The scenery and the people reminded him strongly of the Himalayas, and he expressed his feelings to his companions. He said that he longed to establish a monastery in the Himalayas where he could retire from his work and end his days in meditation. It was also to be a place where his Indian and Western disciples could live and work together. Capt. and Mrs. Sevier were struck by the idea and later decided to establish such a monastery. They came over to India with Swamiji and began to search for a suitable location. They lived for some time in Almora, but the location did not have the seclusion they wanted. Swamiji himself searched for a good place during his tours, but without success. At last, during his trip to Kashmir, he left the matter in the hands of the Seviers who began to search the more remote areas of Almora district, in company with Swami Swarupananda. After much searching, they discovered the estate of Mayavati and at once decided that this was the best place for the Ashrama. It was beautiful, with hills and forests, secluded, and it had a striking view of the snow ranges.

They made the purchase and moved to Mayavati on March 19, 1899. A press was set up there, and the *Prabuddha Bharata* which for a short period came out from Madras and Almora, began to be edited and published from here. Swamiji, of course, was greatly pleased at the fruition of one of his most cherished dreams. He wrote a short article in March 1899 for inclusion in the prospectus of the Ashrama. In this he clearly set forth the ideal of the Advaita Ashrama.

'In Whom is the Universe, Who is in the Universe, Who is the Universe; in Whom is the Soul, Who is in the Soul, Who is the Soul of man; knowing Him—and therefore the Universe—as our Self alone extinguishes all fear, brings an end to misery, and leads to infinite Freedom.

'To give this one Truth a freer and fuller scope in elevating the lives of individuals and leavening the mass of mankind, we start this Advaita Ashrama on the Himalayan heights, the land of its first expiration.

'Here it is hoped to keep Advaita free from all superstitions and weakening contaminations. Here will be taught and practised nothing but the doctrine of Unity, pure and simple; and though in entire sympathy with all other systems, this Ashrama is dedicated to Advaita and Advaita alone' (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,* Vol. V).

Several monastic workers were sent to the Ashrama and regular work began. Three months later, Swamiji left on his second visit to the West, and he did not return to India until December 1900. He was tired, in poor health, and his mind was becoming more and more withdrawn from the external affairs of the world. While still in Europe he had

had a premonition of the death of Capt. Sevier. When he arrived at Belur Math on December 9, 1900, this was confirmed. Capt. Sevier, who was a beloved disciple, had died on October 28, 1900. Swamiji at once decided to go to Mayavati, and telegraphed his decision to Mrs. Sevier.

He left Belur Math later in the month and arrived at Kathgodam on December 29. It was a bad time of the year, and there was a very severe winter with much snow. The party suffered badly during the journey to Mayavati, but at last they arrived on Thursday, January 3, 1901.

There are several sources which give us information about his visit. Swami Swarupananda kept a short diary, which provides the day by day outline of events. Swamiji wrote various letters and articles during his stay, and these are to be found in the *Complete Works*. The *Life of Swami Vivekananda* by his Eastern and Western disciples provides further information. A few more details are also to be found in *Atīter-smṛti,* in Bengali, by Swami Shraddhananda.

In the remaining portion of this article, we will first quote the excerpts concerning Swamiji from Swami Swarupananda's diary record. It is brief and the sentences are often short and telegraphic in form. Following the diary record, we give whatever other information is available about the events of the day, with liberal quotations from the few known letters and articles written at that time.

Before beginning we may mention the names of those who were then residing at Mayavati. We learn from the *Life of Swami Vivekananda* that shortly after the founding of the Ashrama he sent four monastic workers to Mayavati. These were Swami Sachchidananda (Senior) also known as Burobaba, Swami Virajananda, who later became President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Swami Vimalananda, and Brahmachari Harendra Nath. The last mentioned worker is not named in the diary record, so it is possible he was not present when Swamiji visited the Ashrama. In addition, a young American named Charles Johnston had come from New York to live at Mayavati. He took the vows of *brahmacarya* and was known as Brahmachari Amritananda.

We may now begin the daily record. (The blanks are due to illegibility).

January 3, 1901

'Temperature 40° in the morning. Swamiji arrived first after we had taken the morning meal; accompanied by Gobin Lal Shah (—) after 12 before 1 O'clock. He looked very much pulled down. Swami Virajananda appeared next—Swamis Sivananda and Sadananda following long after. The whole party was caught in a blizzard halfway between Dhari and Mournalla and took shelter in a shop (on the 31st) except Sadananda and Gobinlal who got separated and reached Mournalla that evening. The next morning the main party reached Mournalla and they all stopped the day and night there.'

The *Life of Swami Vivekananda* (First Edition) reads as follows: 'The next day the Swami arrived at Mayavati. On the opposite hill he caught a view of the Ashrama buildings and the site pleased him immensely. When he came to the stream in the khud (canyon) below, he heard the bell of the monastery striking twelve, and he was so anxious to reach the Ashrama that he mounted a horse and spurred it on. The monastery had been artistically decorated for this great occasion—the visit of the leader of the Order, the revered Guru of the Brotherhood. Evergreens and flowers and water-filled jars had been placed at the entrances, as marks of an auspicious and hallowed event. Needless to say, the joy of the disciples at the Ashrama knew no bounds at meeting Swamiji after so long a time.'

Yes, the disciples were overjoyed at this meeting with Swamiji, and they vied with one another in serving him in every possible way. This is a potential source of conflict between the ideals of East and West. In India reverence to one's superiors, and especially to one's Guru, is expressed by bowing to him, and in many acts of humble and menial service. The West, and especially Protestant America, believes in self-confidence and self-assertion, and rejects any exaggerated form of homage to great men. 'All men are created equal.' Both ideals are true and noble in their own place and perspective, but there is every chance of misunderstanding between the two. Therefore, on the very day of his arrival at Mayavati, Swamiji took pains to explain the Indian ideal to the American disciple, Amritananda. He said: 'You see how they serve me! To a Westerner, especially to an American, this devotion may seem servile, and you may be shocked at the way I am accepting all this service without remonstrance. But you must understand the Indian idea. Then everything will be clear to you. This is the spontaneous devotion of the *śiṣya* (disciple) to the *guru,* who looks only to the motive. This is one of the means by which the *śiṣya* becomes spiritualized.'

January 4, 1901

'Temperature 40° in the morning. Swamiji went out for a walk down to the Lohaghat boundary in the morning and rode back. Hail came on as we were returning and it began to snow the whole day with slight remissions. It fell about 6 inches. Stopped in the evening.'

January 5, 1901

'Temperature 36° in the morning. Clear, but snow-bound in the morning. Could not get out for walk. Swamiji well.'

On this day, Swamiji spoke to Swami Swarupananda about his ideas and the work which he wished to be done from the Ashrama. He urged him to work for this with great energy and devotion. The Swami replied that he would do what he could, but that, if the work was to be successful, the others would have to work with him and agree to stay at the Ashrama for a minimum of three years. Accordingly, Swami brought up the subject when all were together, and one by one he asked them if they agreed to stay and work at Mayavati. All agreed except Swami Virajananda. He wished to live a life of exclusive meditation practising austerities and living on alms. Swamiji tried to dissuade him.

He said: 'Don't ruin your health by practising austerities, but try to profit by our experience. We have subjected ourselves to extreme austerities, but what has been the result?—the impairing of our health in the best years of manhood, from which we are still suffering. Besides, how could you think of meditating for hours? Enough if you can concentrate your mind for five minutes, or even one minute, and for that purpose a certain hour in the morning and evening is what is needed. For the rest of the time one has to occupy oneself with studies and some work for the general good. My disciples are to emphasize work more than austerities. Work itself should be a part of their *sādhanā* and their austerities.'

There was much discussion. Swamiji admitted later that 'though he had been speaking thus, he knew at heart that Kalikrishna (Swami Virajananda) was right, that he understood his feelings, and that, in truth, he, more than anybody, glorified the life of meditation and the freedom of the monk.' On being questioned later, Virajananda, however, thought it best to yield to his *guru* and abide by his commands.

January 6, 1901

'Temperature 40° in the morning. A clear day. Snow hardened by the frost. Many visitors from Champavat. Swamiji well—went for long walks both in the morning and evening.'

On this day, Swamiji wrote a letter to Mrs. Ole Bull containing an interesting and appreciative description of Mayavati. Some excerpts are given below.

6th January 1901

'My Dear Mother,

Mrs. Sevier is a strong woman, and has borne her loss quietly and bravely. She is coming over to England in April. . . .

'This place is very very beautiful, and they have made it simply exquisite. It is a huge place, several acres in area, and is very well kept. I hope Mrs. Sevier will be in a position to keep it up in the future. She wishes it ever so much, of course. . . . It is snowing heavily here, and I was caught in a blizzard on the way; but it is not very cold, and all this exposure to the snows for two days on my way here seems to have done me a world of good. Today I walked over the snow uphill about a mile seeing Mrs. Sevier's lands; she has made beautiful roads all over. Plenty of gardens, fields, orchards, and large forests, all in her land. The living houses are so simple, so clean, and so pretty, and above all, so suited for the purpose.

'All here send love.

Ever your loving son,
Vivekananda

P.S. Kālī has taken two sacrifices; the cause has already two European martyrs. Now, it is going to rise up splendidly. . . .

'The snow is lying all round six inches deep, the sun is bright and glorious, and now in the middle of the day, we are sitting outside, reading. And the snow all about us! The winter here is very mild in spite of the snow. The air is dry and balmy and the water beyond all praise.'

January 7, 1901

'Temperature 40° in the morning. Clear in the forenoon. Swamiji, Burobaba, Sivananda, Mother, and self walked up to Dharamghar and back in the morning. Swamiji did it fairly well. Wants to build a house thereon. Cloudy in the afternoon. Swamiji felt a little indisposed towards the evening.'

The *Life of Swami Vivekananda* gives further information about the visit to Dharamghar hill: 'Of all the many points of view that one gains of the snows at Mayavati, that at Dharamghar, the highest hill within the Mayavati boundaries, affords the finest view of the snow range. Here, shortly after his arrival, the Swami spent one morning together with the inmates of the monastery. He was extraordinarily pleased with the site and its charming scenery and said that he must have a hermitage erected on that very spot, where he could meditate in undisturbed solitude.'

One other event may be mentioned here, although the exact date when it took place is now unknown. Swamiji had intended that the Mayavati Ashrama should be dedicated to Advaita alone, as may be seen from the excerpt which has been quoted from his article for the Prospectus. No forms of dualistic worship and practice were to be introduced. Yet, when he arrived at Mayavati he found that one room had been set aside as a shrine room, and that regular ritualistic worship was done there with flowers, incense and other offerings. 'He said nothing at the time, but that evening when all were gathered about the fireplace, he spoke vehemently in denunciation of Thakur-Puja (ritualistic worship) in an Advaita Ashrama. It should never have been done. Here attention was to be paid only to the subjective elements of religion, such as private meditation, individual and collective studying of the scriptures, and the teaching and culture of the highest spiritual monism, free from any dualistic weakness or dependence. . . . Though the Swami let them know how strongly he felt against the introducing of the external forms of worship there, yet he did not order them to break up the worship room at once. He would not take an immediate step to shock the feelings of those who were responsible for it. That would be using his power. They themselves must see their own mistake and grow out of it. But the Swami's uncompromising attitude on the matter, in which his two Advaitin disciples, the Swami Swarupananda and Mrs. Sevier, fully shared . . ., led to the discontinuance of worship and, ultimately, to the dissolution of the Thakurghar (shrine room)' (*Life of Swami Vivekananda*).

January 8, 1901

'Temperature 40° in the morning. Swamiji did not go out. It began to snow about 3 p.m. Temperature 38°. Stopped snowing in the evening. Swamiji did not sleep well the first part of the night.'

January 9, 1901

'Temperature 38° in the morning. Cloudy. Snow did not melt. There was no frost. Mr. Beadon[1] and Chirapani Babu (Pandit Kashi Ram) came over by invitation from Mother* in the afternoon to see Swamiji and stopped the night. Swamiji, Mother, self, and Burobaba went out for walk in the morning to the Bungalow. Swamiji did not go out in the evening. Mother, Burobaba, and self went out Lohaghat way in the evening.'

January 10, 1901

'Temperature 38° in the morning. No clouds. Grand snow view in the morning here. . . . Swamiji wrote an article about the Tamilians for *Prabuddha Bharata* in the afternoon and evening, which he read to us. Swamiji slept in the sitting room.'

Swamiji's article on 'Aryans and Tamilians', which is published in the *Complete Works*, Vol. IV, is an interesting study of the ethnology and social organization of India. He points out that virtually every known race and nationality has poured into India with almost every stage of social development, and 'whatever may be the import of the philological terms "Aryan" and "Tamilian", even taking for granted that both these grand sub-divisions of Indian humanity came from outside the western frontier, the dividing line had been, from the most ancient times, one of language and not of blood.'

January 11, 1901

'Temperature 38° in the morning. A very fine day. Swamiji not very well.'

January 12, 1901

'Temperature 44° in the morning. 50° in the afternoon. Swamiji feeling better, came out for a walk. Regulated the time of Badri Shah's sun dial, which he gave away to us. Virajananda made ice-cream. Swamiji felt bad towards evening, but sang a little. So did Sivananda. Swamiji had a sleepless night. Wind sprang up at night.'

Ice-cream was one of Swamiji's favourite dishes, and so serving it was a special treat for him. 'On the twelfth, there was an ice-cream party, through the efforts of the Swami Virajananda, who made a huge, delicious block of it with the help of the thick coating of ice that settles at this season on the surface of the lake. The Swami was delighted with this favourite dish of his' (*Life of Swami Vivekananda*).

January 13, 1901

'Temperature 40° in the morning. Tempestuous. Rainy and cloudy. Rained off and on the whole day and night. . . . Swamiji feeling better. Swamiji had a very good night.

'Swami Vivekananda's birthday—he is 37 today.[2] Was 29 when he spoke at Chicago Parliament of Religions first.'

January 14, 1901

'44° in the morning. Raining. Swamiji and Mother feeling much better. Tempestuous. A heavy and continuous rain. ... Swamiji wrote a para about the Theosophists and began the article on monks as teachers in reply to Justice Ranade's speech in the Social Conference. Thunder and lightning. A little snow fell at night.

'Pitaji's (Capt. Sevier) birthday. He would have been 56 today.'

Though he appreciated much of the address, 'expressed with an earnestness of goodwill and gentleness of language' that was truly admirable, he was critical of the last part of the address which, evidently, criticized *sannyāsins*, and advocated the formation of a body of teachers who possessed all-round experience (that is, who were married).

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[1] A son of a late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

* Mrs. Sevier, as she was called.

[2] This is evidently a miscalculation. Swamiji was actually thirty-eight years old on this birthday. He was thirty when he spoke at the Parliament of Religions, Chicago.

Swamiji, in this article, protested against this view and vindicated the position of the monk. He explained how the monks from the Vedic times tapped 'springs of spirituality and ethics'. From this they were able to 'propagate their marvellous spiritual and social reforms and which, reflected third-hand, fourth-hand from the West, is giving our social reformers the power even to criticize the *sannyāsins*'.

January 15, 1901

'38° in the morning. Cleared up. A little (snow) on the ground. Swamiji feeling very well. Mother and self cleared the water course in the morning. Swamiji came out up to the lake.'

Swamiji wrote a letter to Mr. Sturdy on the 15th. A few excerpts follow.

15th January, 1901

'My Dear Sturdy,

Capt. Sevier passed away about three months ago. They have made a fine place here in the mountains and Mrs. Sevier means to keep it up. I am on a visit to her. ...

'So sorry to learn the passing away of Mrs. Sturdy. She has been a very good wife and good mother, and it is not ordinarily one meets with such in this life.

'This life is full of shocks, but the effects pass away anyhow, that is the hope. ...

And I am ever yours in the Truth,
Vivekananda.'

Swamiji enjoyed walking by the side of the lake. One day, while walking there with Mrs. Sevier and some other disciples, he said with the most lovable childlikeness: 'In the latter part of my life, I shall give up all public work and would like to pass my days in writing books and whistling merry tunes by this lake, like a free child!'

January 16, 1901

'38° in the morning. Cloudy in the morning. Very chilly. ... Swamiji had a good night and feeling very well. Swamiji went out for a walk in the evening with Mother. Mother wrote to Tahsildar. The latter sent his horse in the evening for Swamiji.'

The *Life of Swami Vivekananda* says: 'The fact that he was confined to the house most of the time because of the frequent snow-falls, and that his physical condition was not strong enough to bear the severe cold, made the Swami impatient to go down. But it was found to be most difficult to secure coolies even by paying them at a much higher rate, as none was willing to make the arduous journey through snow. This only added to his restlessness.'

January 17, 1901

'40° in the morning. Very cloudy. Swamiji had a bad night. Chafing at the coolies not having arrived.'

This was Swamiji's last night at Mayavati. 'On the evening previous to his departure, when he was talking in a pleasant mood to his disciples as to what should be done if no coolies were available, Virajananda came to the fore with the remark: "Never mind, Swamiji! In that case we ourselves will carry you down somehow!" At this the Swami laughed outright and said merrily: "Oh! I see, you are scheming to throw me into the khud (canyon)"' (*Life of Swami Vivekananda*).

January 18, 1901

'Looked clear in the morning. Self left about 6.30 a.m. for Chirapani to get coolies, Got 10 coolies, and sent them at about 11.30. ... Met Swamiji and party on the northern hillside above Saraju, returned with him to the Dak Bungalow. ... Stopped the night at Dak Bungalow. Swamiji in good spirits. Tahsildar called in the evening.'

The Dak Bungalow was at the nearby Tahsil town, Champavat. Swamiji left Mayavati about noon, and as mentioned above, met Swami Swarupananda on the way. The party stayed at Champavat overnight, and Swamiji left the next morning.

This was Swamiji's only visit to Mayavati.

It was short, and yet it was long cherished in the hearts of his disciples. It had a decisive effect on the future development of Mayavati. Truly, even the minor events in the life of a great soul will amply repay close study. It is with this conviction that we have presented this detailed account of Swamiji's visit to Mayavati.

TOWARDS AN IDEAL EDUCATION

By Sri S. M. Chingle

The importance of education in making or marring the destiny of a nation can hardly be over-emphasized. Great is the power of education in forming the character and opinion of the people, specially the future citizens of a country. We have to be very cautious, therefore, in framing our educational policies and formulating our educational ideas which, on the one hand, should be true to the genius of our land and its age-old cultural traditions and ideals and which, on the other hand, should be adequate to serve the pressing needs of our growing democratic society and which should also enable us to face any emergency, like the one at present. Only the right type of education can develop the knowledge, discipline and loyalties which together result in keeping up the morale of a people in a period of crisis.

Today, however, the field of education presents many difficulties and numerous problems which defy an easy solution: for example, problems like the growing student indiscipline, lowering of standard in all branches of learning, commercialization and prevalence of malpractices in the sacred temple of Minerva, the evils of an examination system which leaves much to be desired, the thorny problem of the medium of instruction, and so on and so forth.

What, then, are we to do? Are we simply to watch the scene and sit with folded hands doing nothing? There seems to be no justification for any cry of despair and a helpless, much less a callous, attitude. It is the bounden duty of every self-conscious citizen of this great land of Bharata to take care that he does not himself contribute in any way to these or any other evils. If everyone of us were to think in terms of the first person singular instead of the third person, an important step would have been taken in arresting the evil trends which are a matter of deep concern to us all. For the sight is not uncommon that those who cry hoarse over the evils themselves contribute most to the same. But surely adding fuel to the fire will not extinguish it. James Allen rightly says: 'Frequently the man of passion is most eager to put others right; but the man of wisdom puts himself right. If one is anxious to reform the world, let him begin by reforming himself.'

It may be noted in this connection that there are two kinds of education—the one which we receive from others and the other which we give to ourselves, and undoubtedly, the latter is by far the more important of the two. We can profit from the first only to the extent that we are ready to educate ourselves. It is our receptivity that determines the profit that we derive from the first. Obviously the first is bound to be limited by various factors, but the second can and should be a life-long affair and is applicable equally to the teacher and the taught. As soon as the process of self-education is stopped, stagnation sets in, and stagnation may even cause stinking. Intellectual stagnation is tantamount to intellectual suicide. Above all the other fields, it is in the field of knowledge that activity, new and ever-new activity, is life, and inactivity is death. Śrī Dattātreya, with as many as twenty-four teachers, is the ideal *par excellence* for life-long self-education, which does not spurn the lowest of low creatures but gives a place of honour even to inanimate objects. Ekalavya is another outstanding example of this type of education.

Education is indeed a bilateral affair—an affair between the teacher and the taught, and both should exert themselves to play their role well. If the teacher takes his job seriously and becomes a real intellectual light to his students, if he kindles the real fire of knowledge in them and inspires real love for his subject of teaching, if he helps them in doing their own thinking instead of making them mere carbon-copies of his thinking which itself may well be, in most cases if not all, second-hand and a pale imitation of others' thinking, if he puts before them by his own shining example the high ideal of virtue, becoming a man of learning and wisdom, then there could be no reason why most of the students should not make a new beginning in their educational career and open a new profitable chapter in their lives. An ounce of example is definitely better than a pound of precept.

But it may well prove a pious wish in the absence of a proper atmosphere and incentive for the teachers to acquire and impart knowledge. Care should be taken to see that the teachers are made free from financial worries, are provided with the necessary material and leisure for study, and are not overburdened with work. Let us not make drudges of our teachers. Bertrand Russell's following warning must be heeded in this connection: 'Those who have no experience of teaching are incapable of imagining the expense of spirit entailed by any really living instruction. Overwork causes intense fatigue and irritable nerves and a mechanical performance of the day's task.' So also there should be ample scope for intellectual independence in the academic circles. Real democratic spirit can thrive only in such an atmosphere.

Students, too, should likewise understand and play their role well. A sense of discipline is the first thing that is demanded of them. But in place of an externally imposed discipline, they should learn to cultivate self-discipline. Real discipline comes from within; it springs from one's own will. Such a discipline is an asset in life. So also, in spite of the exigencies of examinations, it should not be impossible for them to cultivate spontaneous and ardent love for knowledge. With a genuine love for knowledge and studious habits, examinations would be a source of pleasure instead of pressure. The students should not take to guides and such other second-hand aids, but they should aim at becoming guides unto themselves. Let their study be first-hand, intensive as well as extensive. Such a study will be its own reward. A proper understanding will yield enjoyment of the subject. There is no greater light than the light of knowledge. To ignite this lamp of knowledge should be the aim of every student worth the name. A study on these lines, with this high end in view, will result in making a new person of the student concerned. It will widen his intellectual horizon and will exercise a liberalizing influence on him. It will give rise to that imaginative sympathy which is the hall-mark of a real education. Students should likewise be careful in cultivating good manners, respect for their elders, a right sort of social behaviour and above all, a sterling character. All such higher values of life do not cost anything to practise. They do not involve at any time any want of finances or foreign exchange. What is necessary is only a strong determination and an iron will to acquire the same.

The importance of having a well-defined and well-formulated ideal can hardly be exaggerated. Every civilized and cultured nation takes care to do so. It is therefore necessary to re-define and re-formulate our national ideal of education. But, unfortunately, we have neglected this important aspect of education in the post-independence period. We simply continued the ideal set by an alien government, the only aim of which was to perpetuate its stranglehold on us. For this it created the steelframe of bureaucracy and the able I.C.S. cadre to run the government which was in no way responsible to the people. But this ideal is utterly unsuited to our new democratic set-up in which the administrators are expected to be at the service of the people. We do not, however, have this thing today to the extent desired. Red-tapism and a bureaucratic indifference to the public weal is not an unfamiliar sight even today. This is quite natural in the absence of a well-defined and a properly oriented ideal of education. It is the duty of all thoughtful men in the country to exert themselves in this important task of formulating such an ideal and work it out. The present national emergency has made this task all the more imperative.

While thinking of any national ideal of education, one thing should always be taken into consideration. India is too inalienably wedded to the democratic ideals and the democratic ways of life to follow the pattern, in this respect, of the totalitarian states. Respect for the individual and his fundamental rights, respect for knowledge and truth in place of 'guarded ignorance', and distorted 'sacred facts', and such other cherished values cannot be sacrificed. Our national ideal of education should be consistent with these basic tenets of democracy.

We need not search for the needed ideal anywhere outside the country. Our ancient traditions and culture point out to the ideal in unmistakable terms. That ideal is summed up in the pithy statement: '*Sā vidyā yā vimuktaye*—That is education which leads to liberation.' It may be asked, liberation from what? The reply is, liberation from ignorance in all walks of life—ignorance of the three R's, of science and technology, of proper social relationship, and of all the higher values of life like the moral, the aesthetic, and the spiritual. An all-sided, all-round progress of the nation demands the removal of ignorance in all these fields. Positively stated, the ideal comes to the cultivation of the four ends or values of life—*dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*. Here we have a well-balanced scale of values in which no aspect of life is under-estimated and none over-estimated. Here the economic and the hedonistic values go hand in hand with moral and spiritual values. The study of science and technology is indispensable to assure a minimum standard of living to the underfed and under-clad masses. Likewise, theoretical and practical education for the defence of the motherland and for the preservation of our hard-won freedom is a 'must'. Without them all our development plans will come to nought. Pursuit of the higher values of life is the *raison d'etre* of all our activities and these must be paid due attention. Spirituality above all others has been our forte and care should be taken to see that it remains so.

Dharma is foundational to all the values of life. *Dharma* does not mean 'religion' in the narrow sense of the term. It stands for well-defined duties and codes of conduct for all persons and all classes of people in all walks of life. A student has his *dharma*, so has an administrator, a fighter, a businessman, a man of learning, etc. A proper discharge of their respective duties by all is conducive to the well-being of the individual no less than that of the society and the nation.

An education which aims at such an all-round, all-sided development of life is what is needed today. In it no aspect of life is to be neglected, none overemphasized. Anything less than that may lead to an unhealthy and lop-sided development. The ideal education which we have in view has been appropriately termed 'integral education' by Sri Aurobindo. An integral education takes into account the entire complexity of a man's nature. 'Education, to be complete, must have five principal aspects relating to the five principal activities of the human being; the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic, and the spiritual. … All must continue, completing each other, till the end of life.'

Swami Vivekananda, whose birth centenary we are celebrating this year, laid great emphasis on this type of education: 'Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making education.'

It is, therefore, the sacred duty of all Indians to gird up their loins to bring this ideal into practice, in order to lead our motherland to all-round progress and perfection. Thus only we shall prove ourselves to be dutiful sons of the soil and also true citizens of the world.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE SPIRIT OF AMERICA

By Miss Alice H. Cook

'Oh, East is Eest
And West is West
And never the twain shall meet.'

So wrote the well-intentioned Rudyard Kipling in 1890. And, in 1893, a magnificent figure emerged from the East and came to the West to prove the falsity of that statement.

As we all know, Swami Vivekananda's initial appearance in America was at the Parliament of Religions in 1893. And what did that audience—somewhat bored by long dull talks by former speakers—behold as they looked towards the platform on that eventful afternoon? A princely being, clad in a handsome bright monk's robe, taking possession of the stage, and of their hearts and minds as well, speaking with fiery enthusiasm. And of what did he speak? He spoke of freedom and of the essence of religion. Little wonder that the audience was enthralled. For this was an audience with an American heritage, and Swamiji was enunciating the ideals upon which this nation was founded.

In the year 1620, a little band of pilgrims in a frail vessel braved the turbulent waters of the Atlantic Ocean and came to these shores seeking freedom—particularly religious freedom—seeking to worship God in their own way, seeking the essence of true religion. And in the years that followed, other ships came bearing pilgrims from different lands to join the original settlers, all seeking freedom, all pioneers in the field of democracy.

In the material prosperity which then descended upon the nation, those ideals had in many instances been lost sight of, were lying dormant. And sins were committed in the name of democracy, just as sins have been committed in the name of religion; but there is always an undertone of struggle to keep those ideals alive. It took this colourful character from another world, as it were, to revivify the American spirit, to reactivate the original principles of freedom in America. A native American could not have accomplished it so effectively.

And Vivekananda was himself a pioneer in bringing the East to the West. He had leaped from his monk's quarters in India to what was for him a completely strange land, where his dress was unique, where the manners and customs and speech were different from those to which he was accustomed. But even as he had so mastered the language that he spoke in the most eloquent English—far more eloquent than that which the great majority of his listeners could use—so, too, were his thoughts and expressions like those of a man of God, coming from a well-spring of compassion and consideration for others, the origin of all courtesy. To quote Emerson: 'The sainted soul is always elegant and passes unchallenged into the most guarded ring.'

Thus he was not only accepted everywhere with acclaim, but even, I fear, was exploited by some of his hostesses, who exploited royalty whenever they got a chance. Swamiji was true royalty. But the truly enlightened part of 'the most guarded ring' was comprised of those who, by their very nature, could not exploit, who could only sit at his feet and learn—those who were to form the nucleus of his little band of followers here. They formed the solid rock upon which the Vedānta philosophy was to stand in the West; and many of them were people of influence and import.

The end and goal of Swamiji's teaching in America was liberation—of which freedom is the shadow. He instructed his American students in the great principle that lay behind their national ideal of freedom.

He was living a life of the greatest intensity. As one commentator put it: 'Only a man of Vivekananda's calibre could have withstood the intensity of those days.' Not only was every hour of his life crammed with the greatest activity—activity which he did not want because he longed for the quiet peace of his monk's life in India—but into his activity he put the deepest emotion. So great was his fervour to get his message across.

In addition to giving private lessons to his own band of disciples, he allowed himself to accept assignments from a lecture bureau in order to obtain funds for his work in America and in India. Soon he was beset by many hardships: he was duped by the lecture bureau; some religious fanatics waged a campaign against him, sending out letters to those hostesses who had offered him hospitality, so that, in some instances, he later found their doors shut against him. Then, again, he found himself being misinterpreted in Calcutta, his mission in America being given a political significance. But he always forged ahead. His triumphs were the greater for the overcoming of his handicaps.

And has any one person ever done more to dispel ignorance and superstition—superstition in the West with regard to the East, ignorance in the East with regard to the West? Swamiji tackled this problem with all his might. And to the East he brought a new interpretation of Christianity to replace the limited idea of the Christian religion which had for so long been disseminated in India.

In the many new events which happened, he tried to overlook the undesirable elements in American life and to turn each new experience to advantage in solving the problems of his own beloved country. With his keenness of insight he tried to distil the essence of all that was best in America to hold as an ideal to India. He was enthusiastic in his representation to India of the social reforms—the penal reforms, the care of the mentally ill and the aged—in America. And even though these reforms fall short of what we all would like them to be, he could see what we as a democracy were striving to accomplish, and he looked at our motives as well as at our results.

This, then, was the gift that Vivekananda took from America to India: his interpretation of the democratic ideals—the struggle of a democracy for freedom, for a casteless society, for opportunity for the individual, for relief from the anxiety of old age and sickness. And with these went another gift: some earnest American disciples.

And the gift he brought from India to America was the religious tradition of centuries, the wisdom of the Eastern sages, and he brought himself, the product of ancestry of great devotion, of his training as a monk, of the background of his brother-monks in the Ramakrishna Order, of the benevolence and the struggle for serenity and understanding of the people of India. Even the robe that he wore was a donation from Indian brethren who wished him to take to America their whole-hearted goodwill—wrapped in the most attractive package possible. And most of all, he brought the spirit of Ramakrishna, who had given him the power to work through him. Ramakrishna had even said to him: 'There is no difference between you and me.' And he brought Vedānta to America, paving the way for future Swamis to come here.

So the arms reached across the continents—from the East to the West, and from the West to the East—in an embrace so strong as to merge the two. It was only from a small segment of the population, it is true, but a very earnest segment, comprised of those who could comprehend that the spirit of India was the spirit of America and that the spirit of America was the spirit of India. And by that embrace the door was opened —only a crack—but it was an opening for understanding among all the peoples of the world. For the link with the spirit of Ramakrishna and of India was a link with understanding of all religions everywhere.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

The article on 'The Vivekananda Rock' acquaints our readers with the proposal of a memorial to Swami Vivekananda, which is to be put up on the rock as also with the unexpected difficulties that have lately arisen in its way. We hope the readers will share the views expressed by the writer. We also believe that, with the enthusiasm and goodwill of one and all, which the cause deserves, the whole matter will be correctly judged and the intended memorial will be set up without much delay. . . .

Dr. Anima Sen Gupta, M.A., Ph.D., of the University of Patna, in her learned article in this issue, deals with the meaning of Advaita according to Vijñāna Bhikṣu, a profound, but less known, philosopher of the sixteenth century. Being a philosopher of a truly synthetic outlook, Bhikṣu has, in his commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtra*, tried to lay stress upon the harmonious relation that exists between the different orthodox systems of Indian philosophy. The article seeks to help us understand the meaning of Advaita from a new angle of vision. . . .

Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao, M.A., D.Litt., of Venkateswara College, Tirupati, in his article, 'Swami Vivekananda: His Life and Contribution', makes a rapid survey of the chief events in Swamiji's life and focusses our attention on his contribution in national and international fields. . . .

Sri P. Sama Rao, B.A., B.L., of Bellary, in his article 'Art and Life', says that all art is a concrete representation of something that is abstract and the highest abstract to be realized in life is the Divine. Therefore, art, to be of real value, must be inspired by divine sentiments, for 'art in its highest manifestation is love', and what is pure love but God?

'Swami Vivekananda at Mayavati: A Day by Day Record' by Brahmachari Amal of the Ramakrishna Order is an account of Swamiji's brief stay at Mayavati in the winter of 1901. Though short and uneventful, Swamiji's visit was an inspiring occasion to the inmates of the Ashrama and 'had a decisive effect in the development of Mayavati'. . . .

In his article 'Towards an Ideal Education,' Sri S. M. Chingle, M.A., of the Institute of Philosophy, Amalner, East Khandesh, Maharashtra, pleads for the formulation of a sound educational ideal in present-day India, the implementation of which will bring all-sided development in the life of the nation. . . .

'Swami Vivekananda and the Spirit of America' is an adaptation of the talk given by Miss Alice H. Cook at the annual dinner of the Vedanta Society of New York, U.S.A. She points out here how East and West were brought closer by Swamiji's visit to America.

RELIGION AND HUMANISM

Dr. A. C. Das, M.A., Ph.D., of the University of Calcutta, has written a thoughtful article in the *Calcutta Review* of May last. While tracing briefly the history of humanism right from the Greek thought down to the scientific humanists like Comte of the modern times, he has dealt with the humanistic thinking found in the religions of the East and the West. He has made particular mention, in this respect, of the teachings of Jesus Christ and Srī Caitanya. Coming down to Swami Vivekananda's teachings, he says: 'His teaching gives us a view of human life which can well be called spiritual humanism. ... He pointed out that wherever is a human being there is God indeed, meaning that man is the medium through which God manifests Himself. But the question is: If God in fact pervades the world, why emphasize man as such? Vivekananda got his cue from his master who was convinced that though God is everywhere, He manifests Himself more in man than in any other being or thing. Man is, therefore, the highest medium of the manifestation of God. With Vivekananda this idea became a spiritual force, indeed the new foundation of a new kind of humanism.' Explaining further his point through the teachings of Swami Vivekananda, Dr. Das concludes by saying: 'Some may seek to minimize his contributions, saying that he (Vivekananda), like many of his predecessors, only preached the service of men as the service of God. But the conception of the service of men as the service of God does not necessarily mean or need an immanent God. We can well serve God by serving His creatures—men.

'Vivekananda did not stop with the conception of service, however. He emphasized worship, although he expanded its meaning. With him worship of man as a visible form of God does not mean worship with flowers and leaves. It only consists in the activities that supply the needs of the needy and poor in every sense of the terms—of those who are poor in body or in soul or in both—who have nothing to eat, no house to live in, who are wicked and ignorant too. And it is the attitude adopted that makes worship of such service. In Comtean Humanism one who serves humanity serves it, and there is nothing in it to lead to one's inner development. Furthermore, Comte only replaced religion by humanism. Vivekananda, on the contrary widened the conception of service and in fact effected a synthesis of humanism and religion, of even science and religion, for in his humanistic religion scientific knowledge itself is to be utilized for the good of humanity, not for its annihilation. This new kind of humanism makes men veritable temples of God and would inspire in one an attitude of adoration and love towards others and thus function as the foundation of a new World Order with the deepest human values intact.'

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

RAMAKRISHNA LIVES VEDĀNTA. By Swami Chidbhavananda. *Published by the Secretary, Tapovanam Publishing House, Tirupparaithurai, Pages 487. Price Rs. 7.*

Various publications of authentic biographies and collected sayings of Sri Ramakrishna are available in different languages. But the present work cannot be grouped among those familiar many. Both in his approach and presentation of the subject, the author has struck a new note and adopted a new method. As he rightly states in his introduction, the book is not a biography of the Paramahamsa; nor is it a collection of his sayings. It is an attempt to interpret the events of the earthly sojourn of the Saint of Dakshineshwar as living illustrations of the age-old Vedāntic principles with which the life of the people is vitally connected. And these connections are brought out at different levels —individual, domestic, social, and national. It is an effort to draw out the implied significance of those events and to relate them to the Saint's own mission of not only living the ancient Vedānta, but also of providing the relevant corrective to it as required by the modern times. Undoubtedly, the author has met with great success in this direction. The first four chapters of the book are replete with instances that testify to this statement.

His treatment of Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda brings in bold relief both their roles in the fulfilment of the mission of the Paramahamsa and their own greatness as his ideal wife and foremost apostle, respectively. The chapter on 'Life-education' contains thoughts capable of giving a new shape, a purposeful direction, and a deeper content to modern education.

One would wish that the utterances of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda are quoted exactly and not their substance in author's own words put in inverted commas. The incident referred to in page 372, of the old woman being advised by Sri Ramakrishna to meditate on a pet lamb, the only object of her love, does not seem to appear in that form in the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* or *Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Līlā-prasaṅga*, the two source books on Sri Ramakrishna's life and sayings. There is, however, a similar incident when an old woman was advised to look upon her nephew as 'Gopāla'—the boy Kṛṣṇa of Vrindaban.

After saying all this, it must be pointed out that the author has, on many occasions, used too much liberty in his interpretation of some of the salient utterances of Sri Ramakrishna and some incidents connected with his life. This gives rise to controversy and the need of conscientious criticism and refutation. But such a discussion is beyond the scope of a short review and they should therefore be left to the careful consideration and wise judgement of the readers. What one thinks about one thing need not be the opinion and conviction of all, as is but natural when we take into account the different background, make-up, and power of assessment in different persons. Just as the author has shown an independent mode in his thinking, the readers, too, are entitled to the same independence in assessing many of his deductions, conclusions, and categorical statements based on them.

The language and style of the book are crisp and simple and the careful elimination of the names of persons and places makes it easy reading even for a newcomer to Ramakrishna literature. The book will be welcomed by all who take to a serious study of practical Vedānta in the light of the life of Sri Ramakrishna.

S. P.

RGYAN-DRUG MCHOG-GNYIS. *Published by the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok, Sikkim. 1962 (Limited Edition). Pages 53. Price Rs. 25 or Shilings 50. (Indian Distributors: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyaya, G.P.O. Box. No. 897, Calcutta-1).*

The Namgyal Institute of Tibetology of Gangtok was started in 1958 under the patronage His Highness the Maharaja of Sikkim to encourage research and scientific study in the field of Tibetology. The present publication, brought out elegantly in double-crown quarto size on specially thick paper, contains the masterly reproduction of five coloured plates and two half-tone plates of Icons and Thankas. Each plate is accompanied by a descriptive text with iconographic data; and there is also an account of the lives and thought of eight great Masters: Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Dīgnāga, Dharmakīrti, Guṇaprabhā, and Śākyaprabhā. Plate VII contains the Thankas of them.

The Introduction at the beginning of the volume mentions the object of its publication: 'Our intention was not so much to produce a work for the use of academic circles as to make known, through these great works of religious inspiration, the more important aspects of Mahāyāna philosophy and iconography to a wider circle of readers.' Care has, therefore, been taken 'to avoid technicalities and to steer a middle path in matters of controversy'. But every care has been taken to make the texts authentic; and for that, apart from the help of standard books on the subject, opinion of a number of Lamas and scholars has been taken in preparing the texts, though, the publishers make it clear, these Lamas and scholars are not responsible for the general opinions and findings expressed in the book. The book contains very useful appendices of a Sanskrit-Tibetan glossary, some place names, original sources, and a bibliography.

We have no doubt that this publication will be welcomed by all those interested in the study of Tibetology, as a valuable addition to the literature on the subject.

S. C.

THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF MAHATMA GANDHI AND SARVODAYA. By Dr. V. P. Varma. *Published by Lakshmi Narayan Aggarwal, Educational Publishers, Agra. Pages 308. Price Rs. 12 (Students' edition), Rs. 15 (Library edition).*

Dr. Varma's endeavour to present the various facets of the political philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and link it up with the ideal of Sarvodaya, in the eleven chapters of this book—Part I comprising the first nine chapters on political philosophy and Part II dealing with Sarvodaya in the next two—meets with a remarkable success in separating the relevant from the irrelevant, the essential from the non-essential, and squeezing out the core out of a tangled mess of literature that abounds over the Father of the Nation. The academic detachment that the author exhibits in evaluating the political philosophy of the Mahatma and his knack in expounding in a lucid fashion the ideal of Sarvodaya deserve all praise regardless of whether one agrees or disagrees with the views expressed on the various points. The Mahatma remains a mystic enigma to most of the people who desire to understand him in view of his unique ways of thought and action, and to unravel such a highly complex personality, to bring him down to the plane of rational appreciation is by no means an enviable task. Dr. Varma has done this job remarkably well.

The book starts off with an analysis of the personality and leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. There is a chronological delineation of the successive phases in the evolution of Mr. Gandhi to the stage of the Mahatma and his matyrdom like the other prophets of the world. The next step tries to excavate the philosophical and psychological foundations of Gandhiji's approach to life. Here we find a good analysis of 'Divine Determinism' (p. 64). This is followed by a sift of the link between religion and ethics on the one hand and Gandhiji's political philosophy on the other. Dr. Varma points out that Gandhiji regarded politics to be a branch of ethics, the central core of which was embedded in the principle of non-violence, comprising boundless love and compassion and 'meticulous care for the rights of the least' (p. 98). In substance, this part deals with the necessity to bring about a revolutionary moral transformation of man to ensure unfailing conformity with the ethical norms.

The 'sociological foundations' of Gandhian philosophy explains the means and methods of mending the maladies of the modern industrial civilization. The emphasis on a predominantly rural civilization with the necessary amendments to remove manifest absurdities is a prominent point which Dr. Varma brings out in his analysis of Gandhian sociology. The remedies for social disharmonies based on the Gandhian prescription of 'change of heart' are also examined in this context.

The politico-economical philosophy of Gandhiji is based on the ideal of 'Rāmrāj', which, according to him, is the highest ideal of democracy. The privileged classes are not to be forcibly dispossessed, but are to be converted spiritually to be the trustees of the society. There is to be a commonwealth of mankind based on peace and non-violence. The evils of the present civilization in terms of the craze for power, the lust for wealth, the mania for pomp and splendour, the mad pursuit of vainglorious distinction would all disappear when every member of the society is so imbued with the spiritual ideals as to flourish on renunciation rather than on acquisition. Eventually we come to 'Sarvodaya' which brings us the realization in practice of the ideal of 'Pipa's song' 'All is well with the world'. Dr. Varma seems to come to the conclusion that Sarvodaya is synonymous with Gandhism.

Had the author been a little more critical to explore the distinction between the ideal and the practicable and had he cared to discover the *modus operandi* of achieving the ideals, his endeavour to explore the various facets of the Mahatma would, perhaps, have been more fruitful.

H. G. KULKARNI

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA KANKHAL, HARDWAR

REPORT FOR 1961-62

During the year under review, the activities of this Charitable Hospital were as follows:

Indoor Hospital: Total number of beds: 50. Total number of cases admitted: 1,441 (medical: 1,278; surgical: 163). Details of treatment: Number of cases cured and discharged: 1,272; Discharged otherwise: 112; died: 27; remained under treatment at the end of the year: 30. Daily average of beds occupied: 37.53.

Outdoor Dispensary: (i) *General Section*: Total number of patients treated: 86,780 (new cases: 20,818): (ii) *Surgical section*: Total number of cases treated: 779; (iii) *Dental section*: Total cases of tooth extraction: 340; (iv) *E.N.T. section*: Total number of cases treated: 1,815.

Pathological Department: Total number of specimens examined: 3,545.

X'Ray and Electrotherapy Department: X'rays taken: 621; Total number of patients treated in Electrotherapy Department: 608.

Library: There were 4,245 books in both the Sevashrama and the patients' libraries. The Sevashrama received many journals and newspapers.

Kumbha Mela: The famous twelve-yearly Kumbha Mela was held in Hardwar in March and April 1962, when nearly fifteen to twenty lakhs of people visited the place. The Sevashrama arranged a temporary hospital unit of 50 beds in addition to the regular beds in the Sevashrama. The excellent health arrangements did not necessitate the use of the extra beds much. But the Sevashrama treated 403 indoor cases and 21,592 outdoor cases during the Mela. Nearly 3,400 persons were inoculated against cholera at the Sevashrama. Besides, about 450 pilgrims and 130 *sādhus* were accommodated during the Mela. The Sevashrama organized various cultural and religious functions also during the period.

Immediate Needs: (i) Rs. 1,50,000 for the construction of new wards in place of the old ones; (ii) Rs. 60,000 for a new monastic workers' quarters to replace the old one; (iii) Endowment for 29 beds at the rate of Rs. 8,000 per bed.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVIII OCTOBER 1963 No. 10

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—:o:—

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Allahabad Math, February 19, 1935

The devotees, after having prayed and meditated as usual in the Math's shrine, had gathered in Maharajji's presence. A certain devotee under official orders of transfer to another station was asking Maharaj about meditation, to which Maharaj replied: 'For the purpose of meditation I somehow find the spot between the eyebrows better than the heart. The mind has to be lifted up beyond the outer environment and the sense-world, and then merged in the Self.'

Devotee: 'Has the *bīja-mantra* got any meaning, or is it merely a sound?'

Maharaj: 'No, no. Certainly it has a meaning. I have dealt with it in detail in the *Devī-Bhāgavata*. You will find it there. The best time for meditation is midnight. You can achieve results very soon. Nature is in a quiet mood then and the concentration is easier. The environmental conditions also are favourable at that time. Swamiji Maharaj (Swami Vivekananda) used to meditate at midnight. I used to sleep in the adjoining room, and once while going to the bath-room I found his room bright with a dazzling illumination. Sometimes, he used to sing also at night in an absorbed mood. I once heard him sing a song to the Mother which I still remember. With what absorption and depth of feeling he sang it!'

Devotee: 'But, Maharaj, at the time of meditation, all sorts of useless thoughts assail the mind. What to do about it?'

Maharaj: 'Go on with meditation; don't give it up. In time, everything will be all right. (After a pause, as if speaking to himself) Everybody says the mind is assailed with all sorts of thoughts. Why not put up "No Admittance" and refuse to let those thoughts crowd in the mind?'

On another occasion, speaking about the manner of meditation, Maharaj had said: 'Make a seat (*āsana*) with a piece of woollen blanket, and spreading over it a small *kuśa* (grass) mat, sit erect on it. Visions? Yes, you will have them when the mind is calm and gets fixed on the ideal. But you have to proceed further and plunge into the sea of divine illumination. Anyway, you have taken refuge in the Master. Concentrate your mind on him and whatever visions you get are but his different manifestations.'

Allahabad Math, February 24, 1935

Some devotees were sitting round Swami Vijnananandaji. Maharaj said: 'In an art studio in Calcutta I once saw a beautiful picture of Lord Śiva in a standing pose with matted locks and beard. The portrait of standing Śiva is very rare. I gazed at it intently and was soon filled with a strange ecstasy. The picture seemed to be endowed with life, as if He would immediately come and speak to me. I still remember that feeling of exaltation and the memory of it still fills me with delight. I have told you often to bring me a picture of Śiva standing, but you have not got one for me yet.'

Allahabad Math, February 25, 1935

Maharaj, on being asked by some devotees to explain the 'theory of evolution', said: 'Our scriptures contain everything in regard to all this. The *mantra* we utter every evening is *"Om, ṛtañca, satyañca"* etc. It is the eternal Truth from which the universe evolves and it is This in which it stays and dissolves. Our sages realized it. Our Master used to say: "What is the utility of knowing all this? Invoke the Mother with all your heart and soul, and She will reveal what She thinks necessary for you."

'To Keshab Sen the Master once said: "You have been to so many foreign countries and seen so many things. But couldn't you see the Mother who is holding all the universe in Her?"

'Swami Brahmavadinji[1] told me once: "The Holy Ghost is the Mother, the impersonation of Śakti. Without the Holy Ghost there would be no Jesus Christ." Brahmavadin Maharaj was a great soul, unselfish and wise. When I was at the Brahmavadin Club, he came and stayed there once. He used to spend the whole night in meditation. A great man, indeed.

'Whether you invoke the Mother or not, She is looking after you all right. But if you really invoke Her, you will be filled with joy. See how the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, and the rivers are all in a quiet meditative mood, as if invoking the Mother and thinking of Her only. Only man, the greatest of all created beings, is engrossed in material comforts and does not think of Her. To invoke the Mother with all one's heart and soul is a very joyful experience. My dear brother, there is not the slightest doubt about it. To doubt is to sin. Her divine light is spread everywhere; only man cannot realize it. Babies, six or seven months of age, see that light in their dreams, and laugh and play with their hands and feet.'

* * * *

Early in March 1935, Swami Vijnanananda had come to the Belur Math in connection with the construction of the temple building, and on the 9th March he went to Gadadhar Ashrama at Bhawanipur at the earnest request of the head of that institution. Many devotees came to see him there. In the room on the first floor, which was allotted for his accommodation, hung a large life-like oil painting of Swami Premananda. Vijnan Maharaj reverentially bowed before it several times saying: 'Great souls, wherever they are, create a spiritual zone around them; and anybody coming within that zone realizes something like an electric current passing into him. It is a very strange phenomenon, impossible to explain, unless one has experienced it oneself. Once, when our Math was located in Nilambar Mukherji's garden-house at Belur, on a Dusserah day, I touched Swamiji's feet in obeisance and experienced a shock like that of the electric current. Swami Brahmananda also was a reservoir of spiritual power. One day, when he was sitting in deep meditation, his body had become stiff. I was sitting close to him and felt my nerves also getting stiff and taut.

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[1] An elderly saint who lived at Allahabad.

This is a wonderful play of energy—one's power involuntarily acting on another. Along with such powers, he had a deep sense of humour also. We have seen what wonderful power Swamiji and Rakhal Maharaj had of attracting people. Anyone coming within the sphere of their spiritual influence would find one's ignorance and vulgar instincts fading away. They could change a man's life at will, and remove all his unwholesome inclinations.

'The Master had all power, but he displayed it very little. He would not as a rule interfere with anybody's spiritual bent. One day I went to his room at Dakshineshwar when no one else was present, and sat down on the floor. In the midst of conversation, he suddenly said: "Can you wrestle with me?" I was then a college student, possessed of good physical strength. So I immediately said "Yes" and rolled up my sleeves. He also stood up for a wrestling bout, though he was certainly no match for me. So I clasped him tightly and pinned him against the wall. But he was laughing all the time, and the only result of it was that while he was holding me in his embrace, I felt something like an electric current pass into me. I felt my bodily strength slowly fading out and so I sat down powerless. Such was his wonderful strength!

'Once, while at Varanasi, I heard of Trailanga Swami as being a *sādhu* of a very high calibre. So I went to see him and found him lying nude in the hot summer sun. People said he had a dark complexion, but I found him bright as burnished gold. He seemed to me to be a great soul, emanating a lustrous radiance. That shows the difference between ordinary mortals and spiritually powerful souls. The highest among these great souls are the *avatāras* (incarnations).

'Śrī Kṛṣṇa was an *avatāra*. Human beings, however hard they may strive through spiritual practices, can never hope to become like *avatāras*. If you see all the virtues of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in anyone, you can say you have seen Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. But our Master was more wonderful. The essence of all the previous incarnations could be found in him. He once told me: "As Śrī Kṛṣṇa, I enacted the divine drama of love with the milkmaids and shepherds." I was then a college student and could not believe him. When he saw my dubious attitude, he started talking about the love of those milkmaids for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He said: "The love of these milkmaids for Śrī Kṛṣṇa was real divine love. This love made them mad and forget everything else. As soon as they would hear the sound of His magic flute, they would leave their homes and relatives and rush out to meet Him. Śrī Kṛṣṇa possessed no worldly treasures, but still they loved Him more than life itself, and surrendered their body, mind, and soul completely to Him."

'While saying all this, the Master fell into an ecstatic mood. Bereft of all outward consciousness, he was in a deep trance. And I also, while thinking of all that he had said about the love of the milkmaids for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was transported to a realm of divine bliss. There was an air of charm around him charged with power just like the circle of Kṛṣṇa's *"rāsa"* dance. All my mistaken ideas about *"rāsa-līlā"* vanished for ever, and I gained a new insight into it. After the Master came down from his trance to the normal plane, he started laughing like a child. When I saw all this I was rendered absolutely speechless.'

* * * *

On 10th March, the beginning of the construction of the Ramakrishna temple, as contemplated by Swami Vivekananda, was started. A few days after that, on the auspicious Akṣaya-tṛtīyā day, Swami Vijnananandaji performed the regular *pūjā* and had the work of the foundation begun.

Allahabad Math, March 30, 1935

Swami Vijnanananda had just come back from Belur Math after four weeks' absence in connection with laying the foundation of the temple there. He was somewhat fagged, but elated on having done the Master's work. In that connection he said: 'It was Swamiji's earnest desire that this temple should be constructed. The people to whom he expressed this desire have nearly all passed away. Anyway, the work on the foundation has been started and Messrs Martin & Co., who have been given the contract, have said that the building would be completed in two years. I, however, think it will take not less than three years. It gave me great joy to get the work started. Now my only prayer to the Master is that he will keep me alive for these three years to enable me to see the structure completed.'

A devotee was earnestly praying for initiation, to which Maharaj agreed and said: 'Well, you will have it if the Master wills it. Good things should be done as early as possible, and for the Master's work, any time is auspicious time. I had to give initiation to many people at the Math this time—for nearly three hours every day—and answer so many questions. My initiation is nothing but introduction to the Master. People think the Master is just a picture. But I say that the old man knows everything and will do whatever is needed. ... Mother Annapūrṇā Herself is in Belur Math. The monks have taken the vow of poverty, but the store-room is always full, with people constantly bringing all sorts of things. This is all due to the Mother's grace. ... This time, from the Math I went to Bhubaneshwar and Konarak. At the latter place, I saw the image and temple of Sūryanārāyaṇa. It is about eight centuries old, but looks as though it has been built recently.'

A monk: 'Did you go to Puri?'

Maharaj: 'No, not this time. Our visit to Konarak coincided with the visit of the Governor of Bengal to that place, on account of which the road was closed. It was, however, an advantage in one respect, in that the road underwent repairs and our car could go right up to Konarak. But my strength is now failing in this old age, and the body is no longer active. That is why I had to forgo my visit to Puri this time.'

WHY GOD?

[Editorial]

Swami Vivekananda in one of his New York lectures said: 'I have been asked many times, "Why do you use that old word, God?" Because it is the best word for our purpose; you cannot find a better word than that, because all the hopes, aspirations, and happiness of humanity have been centred in that word. ... Words like these were first coined by great saints who realized their import and understood their meaning. ... The word God has been used from time immemorial, and the idea of this cosmic intelligence, and all that is great and holy is associated with it. Do you mean to say that because some fool says it is not all right, we should throw it away?'

This subject of God is at least the one that, in all probability, will command the attention of the human mind when much of what is generally considered important today has long since been forgotten. It does not require much stretch of imagination to believe that man, in the past, has been talking about God and that in future, too, he will do the same. Whether you and I individually believe in God or not, it is a fact that a very large section of mankind, from the earliest times down to the present day, has been convinced, as Swami Vivekananda has said, 'that behind the gross material form which we call this universe of ours, there must be a Soul, which makes all this thought possible, which commands, which is the enthroned king of this universe. That soul which is behind each mind and each body, is called "pratyagātman", the individual Atman, and that Soul which is behind the universe as its guide, ruler, and governor, is God'. For thousands of years man has been seeking to verify the reality of this Supreme Presence, which he has felt in his heart of hearts, but which he has not been quite able to describe and locate easily. 'Oh that I knew where I might find Him', has been the cry of many a sincere soul, down the ages.

'Life will be a desert, human life will be vain,' says Swami Vivekananda, 'if we cannot know the beyond. It is very good to say: Be contented with the things of the present moment. The cows and the dogs are, and so are all animals, and that is what makes them animals. So if man rests content with the present and gives up all search into the beyond, mankind will all have to go back to the animal plane again. It is religion, this inquiry into the beyond, that makes the difference between man and an animal. Well has it been said that man is the only animal that naturally looks upwards; every other animal naturally looks down. That looking upward and going upward and seeking perfection are what is called salvation, and the sooner a man begins to go higher, the sooner he raises himself towards this idea of truth as salvation. It does not consist in the amount of money in your pocket, or the dress you wear, or the house you live in, but in the wealth of spiritual thought in your brain. That is what makes for human progress; that is the source of all material and intellectual progress, the motive power behind, the enthusiasm that pushes mankind forward'.

But the pursuit of this quest of man has not been easy. He has been baffled in his efforts time and again. He has been advised at times to leave this mad and unreal pursuit and live on the plane of matter and stop at that. But in spite of all efforts to 'disillusion' him, in spite of all his failures to bring this Presence within the compass of his comprehension, in spite of temporary misgivings and doubts, man has clung tenaciously to the thought that he possesses an unseen companionship in this world—more intimate, more sustaining, more vital than any companionship which he enjoys with his fellow beings on this globe. He instinctively feels that there is something more real than the apparent realities, more valuable than all the values of the world, more important for life than mere life itself. And to his great consolation and encouragement in this struggle, there have from time to time appeared a Christ, a Buddha, a Mohammed, and a Ramakrishna, who knew the Great Unknown, who saw the ever-Unseen, who were powerful with that Supreme Power; and on the strength of their realization, declared, as the Upaniṣad once said: 'Oh ye dwellers of the earth, and children of Immortal bliss, even ye with celestial beings, ... I have known the Great Being who shines effulgent like the sun beyond all darkness. One passes beyond death only on knowing Him. There is no other way of escape from the cycle of birth and death'.

II

God is infinite in His glory. So what we do in tune with Him can hardly be compared with the things that are done with a finite end in view. The former surpasses the latter in grandeur, beauty, and sublimity. The idea of infinity, of the unknown, of the mysterious strikes our mind whenever we try to think beyond our material selves. God transcends all limitations, all perceptions of the senses with which we experience matter. 'God would not be adorable', said St. Ambrose, 'if He were not incomprehensible; and a religion that does not transcend man's common understanding is not, strictly speaking, a religion at all'. The great scientist, Einstein, supports this view when he says: 'The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead; his eyes are closed. This insight into the mystery of life, coupled though it is with fear, has also given rise to religion. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the forms—this knowledge, this feeling, is as the centre of true highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty of which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive religiousness.' The Upaniṣad, too, and as a matter of that all the scriptures of the world, have exhausted their entire vocabulary in trying to describe the infinite nature of God. 'He is smaller than the smallest, greater than the greatest. Though sitting still, He travels far; though lying down He goes everywhere. He has neither beginning nor end. He is beyond our mind and intellect'. 'Words along with the mind, failing to reach Him, turn back time and again.'

Why then man, apparently a finite being with limited capacities, seeks after the infinite is a question that perplexes our common understanding. But the fact is that man seeks God for his own sake. It is in the very nature of man to strive to know what is beyond himself. The feeling of curiosity which, springing in the mind of Eve, caused the fall of the First Man, infected the mind of all their coming children—and this has been the cause of man's insatiable thirst for knowledge, of his ever-increasing desire to know more and more, of an undying tendency in him to widen the sphere of his mental activity and comprehension. What was a curse at first has proved to be a blessing afterwards. For, without this thirst for knowledge, there would have been no progress for man.

Western science, too, based on the theory of evolution and the concept of the process of natural selection, emphasizes the importance of the growing thirst for knowledge as the basis of progress of science and civilization. The difference, however, lies in the concept about the origin of man. Almost all religions say that man was a full-fledged being in the beginning; some religions say that the first man was little different from his Maker. He met with his fall when he came in touch with the world and its degrading influence. Science, on the other hand, holds that the first living being on earth was a mollusc; through gradual process of evolution, it evolved into man as we see him today, with capacity to think, to know, and to investigate the mysteries of nature and harness its forces for his own purpose and pleasure. Let us leave the problem of the origin of life to be solved by science or by religion, whichever is competent to do so, or by co-operation or fight between the two. What we are concerned with here is the fact that man's thirst for knowledge is in his very nature and he must reach a stage when this thirst will be satisfied for all times. As the celebrated American scientist, Lecomte du Nouy, beautifully says, 'The story of the original sin can be interpreted as the symbol of the dawn of human conscience in a still primitive being. The picture of Paradise lost by man and which man must conquer at the cost of infinite pain is prodigiously rich in evocative power.'

III

Coming to Vedānta, man is none else than the supreme Brahman. But the veil of ignorance has covered, as it were, his real nature. Why and how this covering has come about on the individual soul is a different subject with which we are not concerned here. The statement of fact is that the 'real Man' is hidden behind the 'apparent man'. Swami Vivekananda, in point of this fact, says: 'The real Man is one and infinite, the omnipresent spirit. And the apparent man, however great he may be, is only a dim reflection of the real Man, who is beyond. The real Man, the Spirit, being beyond cause and effect, not bound by time and space, must therefore be free. . . . The apparent man, the reflection, is limited by time, space, and causation, and is therefore bound'. And the true happiness of man consists in breaking this bondage around him, and discover and realize his real nature. 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal,' says

Swami Vivekananda. The history of human civilization is consciously or unconsciously the story of man's effort to manifest his latent divinity. In this effort, some have looked outward to conquer the external nature, to derive more and more of material comfort and enjoyment, while some others, of a more contemplative turn of mind, have looked within to unravel the mystery of being. In this process, man has looked outside and inside of him and has been awed, as Kant was, at the vastness of the nature round about him and the majesty and dignity of his own existence. The great vault above, with the sun and the moon and the innumerable stars studded in it like so many diamonds, the enshrouding darkness of the night and the bursting forth of effulgent light of the dawn, the mighty mountains and the vast seas, the rolling rivers and the singing winds, all have forced him to postulate the existence of a creator who is immensely more powerful than ordinary human beings and at whose command 'the sun shines, the wind blows, and the fire burns'. All this led him to assume the reality of a being whom he called God—the supreme Creator. For a long time, perhaps, God remained only a figment of man's brain, an object of imagination associated with the hope of reward and the fear of punishment—like an earthly father who sometimes smiles and sometimes frowns. But slowly, he tried to know this Being in more intimate ways, and at one time, a more fortunate one among men came face to face with God and in ecstasy exclaimed: 'I have known this Great One—*Vedāhametaṁ puruṣaṁ māhantam*'. The success of the first man who realized God represented the culmination of the strenuous search of the entire human race for thousands of years. If the creation of the universe with all its varied multiplicity and the origin of life has been a great mystery with mankind, the way in which the thirst for knowledge sprang in human heart and God was at last revealed unto him is no less a mystery. How and why was it that some men forgot and denied themselves all interest in the external world and sought for the Great One who is hidden in His creation, and what was the joy that man derived at His revelation? All these are questions of philosophy. But this fact remains a patent truth that, if the birth of man represents a great landmark in the history of humanity, the event of man's realizing God represents another landmark, and this is no less important than the other. God represents the best that a man can conceive of about the divinity of his soul and realization of God, therefore, represents the manifestation of his potential divinity. 'The Self is the eternal subject, and we are struggling all the time to objectify that Self. And out of that struggle has come this phenomenal universe and what we call matter and so on. But these are very weak attempts, and the highest objectification of the Self possible to us is the Personal God', says Swami Vivekananda.

He further says: 'The highest ideal of every man is called God. Ignorant or wise, saint or sinner, man or woman, educated or uneducated, cultivated or uncultivated, to every human being the highest ideals of beauty, of sublimity, and of power give the completest conception of the loving and lovable God. These ideals exist, in some shape or other, in every mind naturally; they form a part and parcel of all our minds. All the active manifestations of human nature are struggles of those ideals to become realized in practical life.'

IV.

And this struggle will go on till humanity lasts and till it has a reasoning mind. Human souls will always seek for that happiness which does not know waning, that power which cannot become weak, that state of peace which shall never see the face of sorrow. Generations will come and generations will go, civilizations will rise up and civilizations will fade away. Politics, sociology, concepts of life and living will go on changing, but the human soul will, in and through all these vicissitudes, seek for the bliss eternal, for peace supreme, for joy unbounded. In this struggle, it will need courage and power, strength and firmness, hope and perseverence, for such a way of life will never be easy, will never be free from misgivings and failures. And wherefrom will come this courage, this power, this hope? It will come from God Himself—to know whom all these are necessary. In our search for God, therefore, we shall need His help. For, as David Rhys William in his beautiful work *Faith Beyond Humanism*[1] says, it is His power which enables man to keep up his courage when his world begins to tumble in on him; it is this power which enables him to resist temptation and 'pass by on the other side'; it is this power which brings comfort to him in times of sorrow and bereavement; it is this power which makes him reach out for things which appear to be beyond his grasp; it is this power which seems at times to be underneath like an everlasting arm. And it is in the recognition of and in attuning oneself to this power that the life of man gets a meaning and a purpose.

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[1] Philosophical Library, New York, 16. (N.Y.)

THE PLACE OF KARMA IN THE ADVAITIC SCHEME OF DISCIPLINE

By Dr. R. Balasubrahmanian

Maṇḍanamiśra's evaluation of *karma* and its relation to knowledge exhibits certain features peculiar to the Advaitic tradition as embodied in the *Brahmasiddhi*. This paper seeks to bring out Maṇḍana's exposition of the place of *karma* in the Advaitic discipline.

Release, according to Advaita Vedānta, is the direct realization of the true nature of the Self (*ātma-sākṣātkāra*). If so, what is the way to attain it? The knowledge which arises from the Upaniṣads is indirect and mediate (*parokṣa*) and necessarily involves relation in some manner (*samsṛṣṭa-viṣaya*) like any other cognition arising from a valid verbal testimony. One attains liberation only when this indirect and mediate knowledge of the Self or Brahman becomes direct and immediate. According to Maṇḍana, repeated contemplation (*abhyāsa*) upon the content of the verbal cognition arising from the Upaniṣadic texts is necessary in order to get the direct intuition of the Self. Control of the mind (*śama*), control of the senses (*dama*), etc. are essential to transform the knowledge got from the Upaniṣads into immediate experience. Scripture-ordained *karmas* are equally useful to attain Self-realization. If so, we should set forth clearly the role of *karmas* which find a place in the scheme of discipline leading to liberation by examining the relation between *karma* and knowledge; and we should also explain the supreme necessity of repeated contemplation, otherwise known as *prasaṅkhyāna*, and such other aids like control of the mind, control of the senses as well as their place in such a scheme.

Maṇḍana refers to seven theories put forward by contemporary and earlier thinkers with regard to the relation between *karma* and knowledge.[1] 1. According to one view, the injunctions contained in the ritualistic portion of the Veda enable us to realize the true nature of the Self. The Vedic injunctions (*vidhi*) and prohibitions (*niṣedha*) divert men from natural activities to the meditative activity leading to the realization of the Self. By performing the actions which are enjoined and abstaining from those which are prohibited, one becomes eligible for the realization of the Self. 2. According to another view; the performance of *karmas* enjoined in the ritualistic portion of the Veda is intended for the sake of killing desires through a process of enjoyment and thereby to prepare the way for the knowledge of the Self. 3. There is again the view which maintains that the performance of *karmas* is necessary to discharge the three congenital debts (*ṛṇatraya*) whose liquidation is an indispensable qualification for getting the knowledge of the Self. 4. There is also the view according to which *karmas* are not only conducive to their respective fruits, but also to the realization of the Self. 5. *Karmas*, according to another view, purify men and make them fit for getting the knowledge of the Self. 6. Yet another view seeks to show that the knowledge of the Self is a purificatory subsidiary to the agent, subserving the requirements of the various activities prescribed in the ritualistic portion of the Veda. 7. There is, finally, the view according to which *karma* and knowledge are fundamentally opposed to each other and have no relation whatever.

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[1] *Brahmasiddhi* (to be denoted hereafter as *BS*). The Madras Govt. Oriental Manuscript Series No. 4, Part I, pp. 27-28.

Maṇḍana accepts the fourth and fifth among these theories and discards all the others.[2] Refuting the last of the views mentioned above, which he discusses at very great length by referring to the various arguments by which it is sought to be maintained, he advocates his own view regarding the relation between *karma* and knowledge and brings out the place and importance of meditation, control of the mind, etc. in the scheme of discipline leading to liberation.[3]

II

KARMA IS SUBSIDIARY TO KNOWLEDGE

According to the first view, the injunctions of the ritualistic portion of the Veda are as much useful as the Vedāntas for getting the knowledge of the Self or Brahman. There are those who are under the impression that the Self is the body and not something essentially different from it. This erroneous notion which identifies the Self with the body should first of all be removed in order to understand the real nature of the Self. The Vedic injunction enables us, according to this view, to dispel this wrong notion and to correctly understand the nature of the Self. There is, for instance, the injunction which says: 'One who desires heaven should perform a sacrifice.' A person who performs the sacrifice in the way in which it has been indicated in scripture will attain heaven in the next life. His body which is insentient perishes here itself without continuing in the next life to enjoy the happiness of heaven. While the body perishes here itself, there is something which survives the body and enjoys the fruit, and that something is the sentient Self which is totally different from the physical body. So this injunction which enjoins the performance of a rite purports to show that the Self is not the body. By dispelling the wrong notion about the Self, it enables us to proceed along the right direction in our quest of the knowledge of the Self. Further, the advocates of this view try to bring out the usefulness of the Vedic injunctions and prohibitions in the matter of getting the knowledge of the Self by pointing out that they contribute to the control of the mind and the senses, which is absolutely necessary in order to realize the Self. One who is self-controlled, calm, withdrawn into himself, enduring, and concentrated is fit for Brahman-realization[4] and not one who indulges in activities prompted by impulses, passions and desires. The best and the easiest way to escape from these activities is to do those actions which are enjoined and to abstain from those which are prohibited by scripture. The Vedic injunctions and prohibitions are divertive in their character; they tend to turn men away from their natural activities either directly or indirectly. While the prohibitions (*niṣedha*) directly divert men from certain natural activities by forbidding them, the injunctions

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[2] *Ibid.*, Part I, p. 36.

[3] *Ibid.*, Part I, pp. 32-36.

[4] Vide *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV. 4.23.

(*vidhi*) do the same work indirectly by prescribing certain actions, by doing which the pursuit of the natural activities comes to be avoided. The way in which a person is enabled to free himself from the pursuit of the outward activities which are prompted by violent passions and deep-rooted desires is of no consequence. What is essential is the avoidance of those natural activities which enslave the senses and captivate the mind. Since the Vedic injunctions and prohibitions enable us to have control over the senses and the mind, their usefulness in getting the knowledge of the Self is direct and perceptible. Considering the part which the Vedic injunctions and prohibitions play in the matter of getting the knowledge of the Self, it could be said that their import is in Self-realization. It is, therefore, maintained that the performance of *karmas* is necessary as it paves the way for Self-realization.[5]

Maṇḍana does not accept this view as it deliberately twists and tortures the real significance of the Vedic injunctions and prohibitions by means of laboured and far-fetched interpretation. The injunction: 'One who desires heaven should perform a sacrifice' purports to show that heaven should be achieved through sacrifice. It does not intend to show that Self-knowledge is the fruit that will accrue to one who performs the sacrifice. When it is plainly stated that heaven is the end to which sacrifice is the means, it is meaningless to bring in Self-knowledge, which is not mentioned in the text, and say that the text points to Self-knowledge as the end to be achieved by means of sacrifice. If at least the Vedānta texts carry a reference to the injunctions about the ritual with a view to show that sacrifice is the means to the attainment of Self-knowledge, the two can be related as means and end. The Vedānta texts, however, do not carry any reference to the injunctions about the ritual as their work comes to an end when they point out that celibacy, etc. are the means to Self-realization. For every *karma* ordained by scripture there is a certain result. When we wish to get something for which scripture prescribes a particular means, it is but proper to say that what we wish to obtain is the fruit of the act which is prescribed as the means. Further, the end or the result which we wish to obtain is principal (*pradhāna*). There is no justification to ignore that which has become principal on account of its being desired (*kāmyamānatayā-pradhānam*)[6] and substitute it by something else which is out of the picture. When the text points out that one who desires heaven should perform a sacrifice, heaven is undoubtedly the end and sacrifice is the means thereto. If so, the text purports to show that sacrifice is the means to heaven; its import is *not* in Self--knowledge.

There is yet another reason for not accepting the contention that the import of the Vedic injunctions and prohibitions is in Self-realization and not in what they prescribe and prohibit. The status of the individuals, the good results as well as the evil ones which they experience, the sort of life which they lead—all these are explained in terms of their prior deeds. A person who indulges in prohibited acts incurs sin and experiences misery; but one who does what is enjoined by scripture gets the good results like heaven and enjoys happiness. In this way we attribute the good results which accrue to a person to the prescribed *karmas* which he has done, and the evil ones to the prohibited deeds which have been performed. If it be said that the Vedic injunctions and prohibitions have their purport in Self-realization, they do not have any validity in respect of what they prescribe and prohibit, and the corollary which can be drawn from this is that the performance of those deeds, prescribed or prohibited as the case may be, is not in any way responsible for the good or evil results which take place. Since we cannot account for them in any other way, we have to maintain, however absurd it may be, that they take place somehow without any cause. This is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the view that the Vedic injunctions and prohibitions have their import in Self-realization.[7]

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[5] *BS.*, Part I, pp. 26-27.

[6] *Ibid.*, Part II, p. 73.

It may be argued that the scope of the Vedic injunctions like 'One who desires heaven should perform a sacrifice' is not restricted to revealing heaven, etc. as the fruits of *karmas* which are performed; on the contrary, their scope extends as far as intimating Self-realization. An example may be given to elucidate this point. A person asks his servant to go to a certain place in order to get him some commodity which is available there. Since he does not know the route, the master instructs him about the route and the places he should pass through in order to reach the destination. Though the master gives an account of the several places which lie on the way, the information about them is not for their sake, but for the sake of something else. The intention of the master is to acquaint his servant first of all with the various places which lie on the way and through this with the place which he should finally reach. In short, the scope of his instruction is not restricted to giving information about the intermediary places, but extends as far as the final place. Similarly, the Vedic injunctions, it may be argued, give information about heaven, etc. as the results due to the deeds which are performed and through this they intimate Self-realization.

This argument also is untenable as the comparison by which it is sought to be vindicated is unsound. In the example cited above the purpose comes to be fulfilled only when the place, where the desired object is available, is reached and not by going to the other places which are on the way. Since the aim of the master will remain unfulfilled so long as the destination is not reached, it is but proper to say that the scope of the instruction given by the master is not restricted to giving information about the intermediary places, but extends as far as the final place. But in the case of the Vedic injunctions, heaven, etc. are the fruits which are aimed at, and so the scope of the injunctions like 'One who desires heaven should perform a sacrifice' comes to an end as soon as they intimate the fruits like heaven and the means thereof. Maṇḍana draws our attention to the principle which should be adopted in the matter of ascertaining the import of the Vedic texts. The import (*tātparyam*) of the Vedic text should be brought out in accordance with the scope of the verbal statement (*śabda-vyāpāra*) and not otherwise. There is no other means which would enable us to find out its import.[8] When the scope of the verbal statement is restricted to revealing a certain means and the result thereof, we should say that the import of the text lies in that and not in something else which does not fall within its scope. It is, therefore, a tall and unsustainable claim to say that the Vedic injunctions have their import in Self-realization.

The contention that the injunction 'One who desires heaven should perform a sacrifice' purports to intimate the Self as different from the body is equally fantastic. It is true that we should abandon the erroneous notion that the body is the Self. We cannot hope to get enlightenment about the nature of the Self from the Vedic injunction which prescribes a certain *karma* as the means to a particular result. From the Upaniṣadic passages like 'It is neither short nor long ...'[9] we come to know that the Self is different from the body, etc. There is no justification to squeeze out of the injunctive text the idea that the Self is different from the body by subjecting it to a tortuous and laborious interpretation, when the same idea is brought out in as direct and vivid a way as possible by the Upaniṣads.[10]

We shall now examine the contention that the Vedic injunctions and prohibitions enable one to control the mind and the senses and to develop calmness by arresting the pursuit of the natural activities prompted by passions and impulses and that, therefore, they are directly useful to the attainment of Self-realization. While it may be conceded that the prohibitions (*niṣedha*) directly prevent the pursuit of the natural activities which are motivated by the impulses by forbidding them, it is not known how the injunctions (*vidhi*) which prescribe the performance of *karmas* like *agnihotra* could be said to divert men from the natural activities by eliminating or excluding them.

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[7] *Ibid.*, Part I, p. 28.

[8] *Ibid.*, Part I, p. 29. *Ibid.*, Part II, p. 74.

[9] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, III. 8.8.

[10] *BS.*, Part I, p. 80.

There are three kinds of injunctions: (1) original injunction (*apūrva-vidhiḥ*), (2) restrictive injunction (*niyama-vidhiḥ*) and (3) exclusive injunction (*parisaṅkhyā-vidhiḥ*). A restrictive injunction is that which restricts something that is known only as a possible alternative. It is already known to us that we can remove the husk of the rice grains by threshing them or by splitting them with nails. When both the alternatives are open to us, husking by means of threshing is purely optional. There is, however, the injunction which says: 'One should thresh the rice grains.' Since this injunction specifically states that the husking shall be done by threshing only, it is known as restrictive injunction. The point that should be noted here is that because of this injunction the other alternative, viz. splitting with nails which is also known to us, comes to be totally eliminated.[11] When something may be taken to refer to both of two alternatives simultaneously, the injunction that precludes one of them is called an exclusive injunction. We can take the sentence 'One should catch hold of the rein of the horse by saying . . .' as an instance of exclusive injunction. In the absence of this injunction, the sacred text expressing the seizing of the rein would apply to seizing the rein of the donkey as well as that of the horse. But since there is this injunction one should seize the rein of the horse uttering the sacred text and not that of the donkey. Thus an exclusive injunction leads to the elimination of one of the two alternatives, to both of which something may be taken to refer simultaneously.[12] An original injunction is that which tells something utterly unknown. For example, the sentence 'One should sprinkle the rice grains' is an original injunction, in the absence of which sprinkling with regard to the rice grains would never be known.[13] The main difference between the original injunction, on the one hand, and the restrictive and exclusive injunctions on the other is that, while the former tells something which was utterly unknown (*atyanta-aprāptārtha*), the latter lead to the elimination of one of the alternatives which are already known (*prāptārtha*). The injunctions which prescribe *agnihotra* and other *karmas* are not restrictive or exclusive injunctions; on the contrary, they are original injunctions, for they enjoin something which was utterly unknown. If so, they cannot lead to the elimination of the natural activities which are prompted by passions and desire.[14]

If at least there can be any conflict or opposition between the *karmas* which are prescribed by the Vedic injunctions and the natural activities, one can suggest that the performance of the Vedic *karmas* will be prejudicial to the pursuit of the natural activities, and that therefore they will cause them to disappear. Both of them—the Vedic *karmas* and the natural activities—are conducive to happiness; nevertheless, there is a notable difference between them. While the pursuit of the natural activities contributes to happiness here and now, the same cannot be said of the Vedic *karmas*. In other words, the result of one set of activities is perceptible (*dṛṣṭārtha*), whereas the result of the other set of activities is imperceptible (*adṛṣṭārtha*). And so there can be no conflict between the Vedic *karmas* and the natural activities, since they yield their respective results at different times. Not only are they not conflicting but they may be said to be, to use the expression of Leibnitz, quite 'compossible', though they contribute to the same result, viz. happiness. A person serves his master ardently as well as faithfully and also performs a sacrifice known as the *sāṅgrahaṇī* with a view to get a village. The sacrifice which he performs does not stand in the way of his service to the master. The two activities—service and sacrifice—are not conflicting, but are compossible. There is no disjunction between service and the *sāṅgrahaṇī*. One may perform them both on the same day or on different days. So the *sāṅgrahaṇī* does not exclude service. Though they are means to the same result, the contribution of the one may be perceptible whereas that of the other may not be so. In the same way, the Vedic *karmas* and the natural activities may be thought of as compossible and not conflicting, even though they contribute to the same result. In so far as both of them are conducive to happiness by fulfilling desires, they are on the same footing. Just as the natural activities in which a person indulges are in fulfilment of certain desires which clamour for satisfaction, the Vedic *karmas* also which a person performs are in fulfilment of certain desires like heaven, etc. So far as the state of mind is concerned, there is no difference at all in both the cases, for it is overwhelmed by the desires which are dominant, whether they are for the attainment of certain things here or hereafter. When the mind falls a prey to the captivating desires and remains in a state of agitation and disturbance, how can it be said that the performance of *karmas*, which are indicated as the means to the fulfilment of desires, is directly useful for Self-realization by contributing to the control of the senses and calmness of mind?[15]

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[11] *Mīmāṁsā-paribhāṣā* (translated and annotated by Swami Madhavananda, The Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Pitha, Belur Math, 1948), p. 20.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

[14] *BS.*, Part I, p. 29,

According to the second of the views mentioned earlier, *karma* is treated as a subsidiary to the knowledge of the Self on the ground that it enables us to acquire it by killing our desires through enjoyment. Desires are the formidable obstacles to our getting the knowledge of the Self. It is only when they are extirpated, root and branch, that a person is able to get the vision of the Self. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, for example, says: 'When all the desires that dwell within the human heart are cast away, then a mortal becomes immortal and (even) here he attaineth to Brahman.'[16] The way to achieve this lies through *karmas*. The reason for this is obvious. Desires are killed only through a process of enjoyment and cloying. They cease to exist when the objects which are desired are realized. Since the performance of *karmas* leads to the appropriate fruits whch are aimed at and thereby to the fulfilment of desires, the advocates of this view maintain that *karmas* whose performance is necessary to get the knowledge of the Self are subsidiary to it.

This view also is untenable. It proceeds on the wrong assumption that the enjoyment of the desired object leads to the fulfilment of desire and thereby to its extinction. Every effort that we make to realize the objects for the purpose of satisfying our desires serves to augment rather than to abate them. When enjoyment becomes a habit, it is always sought after relentlessly, and there can be no end to this. That is why Manu declares that desires can never be extinguished by enjoyment.[17] The author of the *Yogasūtra-bhāṣya* also points out that 'desires grow keeping pace with their enjoyment.'[18] Far from helping us to attain the knowledge of the Self, the *karmas*, which the injunctions prescribe as the means to the realization of the objects which are desired, become a positive hindrance to us. If a person is ignorant of the means conducive to the fulfilment of his desires, he may at least seek the knowledge of the Self. When he comes to know of the various means and the results thereof through the Vedic injunctions, he will naturally pursue them caring little for the knowledge of the Self; he may even abhor that knowledge which is destructive of all human enjoyments. Therefore, enjoyment of the objects which are desired is no remedy at all to remove the desires. What is required is an insight into the worthlessness of what is desired. If we realize and repeatedly contemplate upon the truth that the objects desired by us are ephemeral, and that they do not give us abiding satisfaction, we are sure to root out our desires and strive for the realization of the Self. Maṇḍana urges another reason also to show the absurdity of this view. If a person who is desirous of Self-realization were to remove all his desires only through a process of enjoyment and satiety, it would become obligatory for him to perform all the *karmas* as the indispensable preliminary to the attainment of the knowledge of the Self. This is on the face of it an impossible task.[19]

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[15] *Ibid.*, Part I, pp. 29-30.

[16] II. 3.14.

[17] Manu, II. 94.

[18] *Yogasūtra-bhāṣya*, II. 15.

(*To be continued*)

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[19] *BS.*, Part I, p. 30.

SANSKRIT DRAMA

By Sri Jotindra Nath Mukherjee

Indian tradition points to the divine origin of Sanskrit drama. In ancient times, so runs the tradition, at the advent of Tretā-yuga, conditions in Jambūdwīpa[1] were not quite happy. Life had been vulgar; dissension, selfishness, and jealousy were rife. Grieved at this, Indra with other gods approached God Brahmā and requested him for a play that could be heard and seen as well. The great God took materials from the existing Vedas and brought into existence the *Nāṭya-veda,* wherein the text was taken from the *Ṛg-Veda,* the music from the *Sāma,* the action from the *Yajus* and *rasa* (or artistic flavour) from the *Atharva,* and requested Indra to produce a drama. As Indra pleaded his inability to do so, Brahmā entrusted the work to Bharata, a man of keen insight, talent and practical sense. Bharata with the help of his one hundred sons, the nymphs from heaven, and Nārada and other divine musicians staged in the open, at 'banner festival' (*dhvajotthāna*) of Indra, a drama depicting the defeat of the demons by the gods. The demons naturally became very angry, and raised a hue and cry during the performance; so it became necessary to have a play-house. The next performance was given in a play-house by Bharata, who staged *Amṛta-manthana,* where the gods and the demons were shown as working in co-operation. The performance was a grand success. Brahmā then introduced Bharata to Lord Śiva, who was so pleased with Bharata's art that he advised him to add dance to drama. The above, in a nut-shell, is the account of the divine origin of Sanskrit drama.

But many scholars have dismissed this as having no historical value. They have propounded hypotheses regarding its origin, namely (1) that the drama in India originated from the recitals of the dialogue-hymns of the Vedas during the sacrificial ceremonies, (2) that it originated from the dumb-puppet shows, and (3) that it has its origin in the Sūta tradition of the Purāṇas.

The germs of the Indian drama are to be discovered in the *Ṛg-Veda*. There are at least fifteen hymns there, which comprise dialogues between two or more parties. These attracted the attention of a good many scholars, who, with their help, have endeavoured to explain the origin of the Sanskrit drama. Max Müller was the pioneer to demonstrate that they were most probably recited in honour of the respective gods, when

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[1] Ancient name of India.

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different parties representing different gods held conversation.

Some scholars attribute the origin of Sanskrit drama to the puppet-plays. From very early times, some sort of puppet-play was in vogue in India. In the *Mahābhārata*, men in the hands of gods are compared to puppets, controlled by the holder of the thread (*Sūtra-prota*). That puppets were also introduced on the stage is known from the *Bāla Rāmāyaṇa* of Rāja Śekhara. The question arises whether the puppet-play preceded the human play; and in this respect, different scholars have advocated different views. It seems Sten Kenov is very probably right in his surmise that the puppet-play was developed out of playing with puppets, which in their turn, are but imitations of actual life.

Recently Prof. R. V. Jagisdar of Karnatak College (Dharwar) has put forward that Indian drama has its origin in the Sūta tradition of the Purāṇas. Bharata tells us that his *Nāṭya-veda* was open to all *varṇas* and that it was created as the extant Vedas were not accessible to the *śūdras*. Such a form could only be of literature, the epic and purāṇic lore. The principal reciter of the epic and purāṇic dialogues is the famous Sūta. It seems that the *Sūtradhāra* of Bharata is a stage substitute of *paurāṇika* Sūta. Thus according to this theory, the art of dramatic representation in India was the creation of the people from the life they lived and saw, as every good art is. The people took their stories and heroes from the history and mythology, which Sūta preserved for them from the epics and the Purāṇas.

Whatever may be the origin of the Sanskrit drama, the small number of Sanskrit dramas that are still available to us today, leaves no doubt that it was highly developed. Aśvaghoṣa seems to be the earliest dramatist, flourishing during the regime of Kaniṣka, and being the author of *Satiputra Prakaraṇa* which has unfortunately come down to us in fragments. The earliest available dramatic works are the thirteen plays ascribed to Bhāsa (200-300 A.D.). These plays taken together reveal their dual character, epic and artistic. Scenes of *Swapna-vāsavadattam*, *Pratimā Darśanam*, and the like unravel the dramatic talent of the author. Most of the plays are drawn from the famous epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata* and, perhaps *Harivamśa*, and they show epic manner of construction. Bhāsa has given us a few fine tragedies, namely *Dūta Vākya*, *Dūta Ghaṭotkaca*, *Karṇābharaṇa* and *Ūrubhaṅga*. In all these plays, the hero is placed high above the other characters and made to suffer, and, what is more, suffer through his own greatness. Bhāsa's plays are thus symbols of his age, and they represent the first advance towards art.

Until the days of Kālidāsa, drama was inspired by the epics, had a narrative form, and the dramatist was more of a moralist than an artist. With the advent of Kālidāsa (400 A.D.), Sanskrit drama reaches the acme of its artistic creation. He wrote three plays, namely *Mālavikāgnimitra*, *Vikramorvaśīya*, and the world famous *Śakuntala*. To him, drama is what life is. He is fully conscious of of his new efforts. In *Mālavikāgnimitra* which is a harem-play, the manner of its composition draws our attention. In *Vikramorvaśīya*, he has introduced new modes of music. The flower of his genius, however, is *Abhijñāna Śakuntalam*. It is a true picture of what life means for Kālidāsa who has created an immortal world out of mortal clay. *Śakuntala* is a play in which earth and paradise unite, in which human life gets sympathy even from the animal and vegetable world. In this drama, once and for all, harmony and unity of the universe is established, felt and realized. Men and women in *Śakuntala* are the artist's creations, and they are as the dramatist wants them to be, and not as they are in mythology.

Mṛcchakaṭikā of Śūdraka is another artistic play. Here even revelry has its own beauty. Everything here is unbelievably strange, and yet perfectly life-like. The story of Chārudatta and the courtesan Vasantasenā with thieves, revolution, and the like forms a classic in the world literature. Kālidāsa and Śūdraka have created true art. Their works became models for generations to come.

After the age of creation of Kālidāsa and Śūdraka, came the age of imitation and repetition. This is illustrated in the plays of King Harsha of Kanouj—*Priyadarśikā, Ratnāvalī* and *Nāgānanda*. Harsha succeeds as a poet, but fails as a dramatist. He writes not because he has anything to say, but because he wants to be recognized as a dramatist in his own right. Hence he yields his art to technique. Harsha's plays reflected a stage when drama had turned to be stale.

An artist of strong determination, ability, imagination, and genius was required to lead Sanskrit drama from the blind alley after the death of Harsha. Bhavabhūti (about 700 A.D.) and, Viśākhadatta (about 800 A.D.) came to the rescue. Viśākhadatta composed *Mudrā Rākṣasa,* a drama dealing with Chandra Gupta Maurya and Chāṇakya, and demonstrated that even political intrigue can be turned into a subject of good art. Among the Sanskrit dramatists known to us, Viśākhadatta is the only one of his type. He is the author of another play *Devī-Candragupta,* based on the life of Chandra Gupta II of the Gupta dynasty, now found in fragments.

The great poet Bhavabhūti wrote *Mahāvīra Carita, Mālatī-Mādhava,* and *Uttara Rāmacarita* and gave such a turn to drama that the Indian stage was revolutionized. The fact that his dramas do not conform to fixed rules of the science and yet appeal to lovers of the theatre, only goes conclusively to prove that he infused new life into the old art. It is not for nothing that he has been offered a place by the side of Kālidāsa. Some even opine that, in *Uttara Rāmacarita,* he excels even the old master Kālidāsa.

Bhavabhūti's masterpiece had many imitations, namely *Anargha Rāghava* of Murāri, *Bāla Rāmāyaṇa* of Rāja Śekhara, and *Prasanna Rāghava* of Jayadeva, none of which shows dramatic talent, and each of which is more or less a failure. Bhavabhūti and Viśākhadatta were the last of the giants. The Sanskrit drama, after them, saw its eclipse. The only noticeable drama of after time is *Prabodha-Candrodaya* of Kṛṣṇa Miśra, which is philosophy in the form of dialogue.

As a result, Sanskrit drama lost its public appeal. It came to be limited to intellectual and learned men only. Prākrit came into vogue in different regions, which gave birth to modern vernaculars of northern India. Dramas of modern Indian languages have sources of inspiration from Sanskrit dramas, though they are getting at present transformed under impacts of modern trends and problems and techniques.

BRITISH RULE AND INDIA'S CULTURAL RENAISSANCE

By Dr. Nandalal Chatterji

Now that India is a free nation and is earnestly endeavouring to build up her national character and integrity anew, it may not be inappropriate to attempt a historical review of the influence of British rule on her cultural heritage. Free India must necessarily take stock of the various cultural trends, including the cultural legacy of British rule, that have contributed towards the building of her modern national fabric, so as to be able to formulate her new outlook and future goal.

The period when British rule got itself entrenched in this country during the middle of the eighteenth century may be designated the dark age of modern India, for the old order lay prostrate with the disappearance of the Mughal empire, and the resulting vacuum was leading to a kind of cultural anarchy which reacted adversely on the people's morale and self-consciousness. The East India

Company's early administration only aggravated the chaos, for, being suddenly uplifted from the unromantic and dull monotony of factory accounts to the dizzy heights of political power, the Company's servants naturally got too much engrossed in personal aggrandizement to be able to think of cultural pursuits. They were out for shaking the pagoda-tree, and they had no time or inclination for anything else. The outlook in those early days of British power was indeed gloomy for India, and a feeling of frustration seemed to weigh on the minds of thoughtful people all over the country. Indian vernacular literature of this period, for example, betrays the utter despair and escapism that had crept into the country's inner soul, and its passionately devotional or morbidly erotic notes reveal the temper of an age that was crumbling in the midst of the tinsel artificiality of a dying order.

But India's national culture has been a continuum always and, even in the politically decomposed and culturally disintegrated india of the eighteenth century, a complete break with the past was not possible. Besides, the John Company could count amongst its servants a few who did not blindly follow the policy of 'get-rich-quickly-and-clear-out-of-the-country'. These rare individuals in the Company's service had the healthy zeal and determination to study India's religious and secular literature. Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General, was the most notable among those early European students of Indian culture, and his patronage was of vital importance to the growth of Indological studies in that age.

In fact, Hastings's interest in oriental learning had a potent influence on the cultural life of British India. With his innate sympathy for Indian learning, he became, unofficially of course, the chief patron of India's old learning. He took an unusual interest in Indian law—Hindu and Muslim—and got it systematized at his own expense. This pioneer work prepared the ground for its ultimate codification, and modern adaptation and simplification. A number of Indian works which were mostly in Persian or Sanskrit came to be produced under the direct patronage of the Governor-General to whom these were dedicated by the authors. Sayyid Ghulam Husain's *Siyār-ul-Mutaakhkhirīn* is a well-known example of this kind. The Calcutta Madrasa was founded by Warren Hastings himself, and the establishment of the great Asiatic Society of Bengal was in no small measure due to his encouragement and patronage. Warren Hastings was such a warm admirer of oriental classics that he even proposed the inclusion of their study in the courses of the University of Oxford. He took a keen interest in painting and other fine arts, and his patronage was responsible for the success of a number of European painters who came to India at this time.

Hastings's example was naturally a source of encouragement to other Europeans who wanted to study oriental languages and institutions. The most distinguished trio among these contemporaries of Warren Hastings was that of Charles Wilkins, Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, and William Jones. These three scholars may be regarded as the pioneers among European orientalists, and their historic contribution to Indian learning is of permanent value to modern India. Mr. Wilkins who was well-read in Persian, Bengali, and Sanskrit was the father of Indian printing, for the Persian and Bengali printing types cast by him made printing in these languages possible for the first time in India. In order to achieve success in a country so remote from Europe, he had to play the role of a metallurgist, engraver, founder, and printer—all in one. Apart from printing, he acquired such mastery of Indian classics that he produced the first English translation of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, which was published in London (in 1785) under the patronage of the Directors of the East India Company. His translation of the *Hitopadeśa* appeared a couple of years later. But Wilkins's achievement in the field of Indian epigraphy was no less profound and inspiring. His work, in short, marked the real beginning of Indological studies among Europeans in India. Mr. Halhed was an equally distinguished orientalist, and his *Bengali Grammar* is a pioneer work of immense value.

Sir William Jones was, however, the most brilliant of the three, and his place among the European students of oriental learning is memorable in the history of modern India. He had proficiency in nearly every one of the many European languages, and what is indeed remarkable, he was master of Hebrew, Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit. His linguistic and also scientific attainments were a veritable marvel of that age, and it is indeed surprising how, in the midst of his arduous duties as a judge of the Calcutta Supreme Court, he could find time for his oriental studies. His most historic work was the foundation of the Asiatic Society of Bengal for the study of the history, antiquities, arts, sciences, and literatures of Asia. He became its first president as Warren Hastings gracefully declined the honour in his favour. His scholarship and also his expert guidance of scientific and literary studies under the auspices of the Asiatic Society produced results of a high order, and laid the foundations of oriental research in India. The Asiatic Society of Bengal soon became the prototype of similar learned societies in other Presidencies. Through these societies the portals of oriental learning were thrown open to the West, and Europe and America began to draw some inspiration from the East —a fact which was testified to by such great writers of the last century as Goethe, Schlegel, Emerson, and Thoreau. The Indian people's self-esteem which had reached almost the vanishing point under the onslaughts of Western culture had a new and unexpected stimulus in the European appreciation of Indian culture. Thus 'Asiatic' Jones and his collaborators may well be regarded as the pioneers of Indian renaissance itself.

The work begun by these early pioneers was continued with equal zeal and persistence by Henry Thomas Colebrooke, an eminent civilian in the Company's service in Bengal. His studies in Sanskrit were as profound as they were extensive, and his researches in Indian philosophy, Vedic literature, mathematics, and astronomy entitled him to be ranked as the foremost orientalist of the early nineteenth century. The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain, which owed its inception to his personal efforts, is one of his lasting contributions to oriental studies in Europe.

This enthusiasm for delving into oriental culture was, however, confined to a select few. The Company's government officially took little or no interest in the promotion of oriental scholarship. The Calcutta Madrasa owed its origin to the personal interest of Warren Hastings, and its counterpart—the Sanskrit College of Benares—was likewise established through the efforts of the local British Resident. The Fort William College for the Company's servants was similarly founded by Wellesley on his own initiative. These colleges, however, made little progress, for, while on the one hand the Government provided insufficient funds, very few Indians on the other hand availed themselves of the instruction provided in these institutions. Things came to such a pass that there were often more teachers than students in the oriental colleges. The Fort William College meant for the Company's junior civilians did encourage vernacular studies for a few years, but this institution was closed down under the orders of the Company not long after its inception. This failure of oriental education was due, firstly, to inadequate financial support; secondly, to missionary opposition and propaganda; thirdly, to the new-born craze for English education among the enlightened Indians; fourthly, to the recruitment of only English-knowing Indians to the Company's services; and lastly, to the misrepresentation of the Anglists who had no knowledge of the oriental learning, and who ridiculed the oriental classics as 'of less value than the paper on which they are printed was when it was blank'.

While classical studies languished, modern

Indian literatures, however, received powerful stimulus from European missionary enterprise in the early part of the nineteenth century. The Serampore missionaries, for example, did valuable pioneering work in the development of modern Bengali literature, Bengali journalism, and Bengali printing through their translations of the *Bible* and other original works of a useful nature. Of these missionaries, William Carey, J. C. Marshman, and William Ward formed an illustrious trio whose educational, cultural, and journalistic activities are of vital importance to the history of modern India. The Anglo-Indian Press, which began its long and historic career with the first English newspaper founded by James Hicky in 1780, made a profound impression on the mind of the educated Indians who, along with their Christian missionary collaborators, finally laid the foundations of a popular press in India.

One of the noteworthy contributions of the Britishers in the days of John Company was their momentous decision to make the new occidental learning the foundation of Indian education, and that through the medium of English. The uninformed criticisms of oriental learning in Macaulay's historic minute would sound ridiculous at the present day, and Macaulay's arrogant sarcasm about 'seas of treacle and seas of butter', or his impudent boast that a shelf of a good European library was worth the entire treasures of oriental literatures may not matter anything to us now, but the fact remains that the foundations of India's present day revival as a nation were laid in the cultural movements which issued directly from the fountainhead of English education, or indirectly as an inevitable reaction against the excesses of Anglicization. That English education deeply stirred the depths of the Indian mind, and broke up its inertness is an undeniable historical fact. Even the reaction which came against the fast-moving tide of Westernization assumed an expression which was fundamentally based on a deep study of the Western civilization. The educational policy of the Government was neither progressive, nor comprehensive, yet it helped to create a large and progressive educated middle class of people who became the mainstay of India's cultural revival and political awakening.

Secularization through liberalization was, however, the main contribution of British rule to Indian culture. The new wine of Western thought produced a natural ferment in India, and it resulted in the growth of a secular outlook on all aspects of life. Even in the sphere of Indian religion, European rationalism had a deep influence, and it prepared the ground for a new emergence. Ram Mohun Roy who is justly regarded as the father of modern India was, in spite of his unrivalled oriental learning, essentially a rational humanist who was deeply influenced by Western liberalism and Christianity. His zeal for reform as well as revival in the spheres of society and religion was much too rational and much too impregnated with Western liberalism to have any direct appeal to the common man. But it gave the newly-educated middle class a spiritual balm in the midst of the destruction of old values and the old way of life. Ram Mohun Roy was a great reformer, but he was more distinguished as the founder of various secular movements in India. He was, in fact, the first modern man in India. But, all his movements—social, educational, cultural, or political—owed their prime inspiration to the fount of English education. The movement of social reform and female emancipation was, for instance, a direct offshoot of Western humanism. The abolition of *satī* and slavery, or the legal recognition of widow remarriages reflected a liberalism which came along with the introduction of English education. Even Indian nationalism was the child of Western influences in more ways than one. The wave of cultural reaction, which was marked by the rebellion of 1857, failed to stem the tide of secularization, and in the ideological conflict that came in its wake, Western liberalism won the day, and finally broke India's cultural isolation as also her intellectual stagnation. The 'Rebellion' virtually marked the end of the old order and the old way of thinking.

The complete ascendancy of the new learning was the key-note of India's cultural history after 1857. But it was through the new learning that India redeemed its lost soul. The first phase of this revival was religious and the mighty minds like Ram Mohun Roy, Dayananda, Keshab Chandra Sen, and Vivekananda formed the motive force of this awakening. That this religious revival is closely interlinked with India's freedom movement needs no elaboration. In short, a new India had already arisen with the impact of Western culture, and the varied religious developments of the post-Rebellion period, such as the reappearance of orthodoxy among a section of the educated Hindus, the growth of synthetic eclecticism in the Brāhmo movement, the intensification of the Muslim reaction associated with the Qadiani and the Aligarh movements, the birth of the neo-Vedāntic order of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, the inception of the aggressive revivalism of the Arya Samaj, or the philosophic and spiritual latitudinarianism of the Theosophical movement fostered the forces which all served to strengthen and inspire the Indian national movement of our times. European thought wielded a potent influence on the mind of young India. The democratic faith of the Victorian age, no less than its positivism and humanism, moulded the thought currents of modern India; and Comte, Mill, Carlyle, Mazzini, Kant, and Fichte inspired new trends in Indian literature and political life. Even Western unbelief led to repercussions in Indian society in the form of intellectual agnosticism and moral epicureanism. Both the orthodox reaction and the rationalism of modern India were thus a product of British rule and English education.

The post-Rebellion period witnessed cultural developments through official agencies in various other directions as well. The Archaeological Department prepared the ground for a renewed Indian interest in the country's art, architecture and epigraphy. The Education Department sought to revive oriental research on modern scientific lines. European scholars in India and abroad patiently reconstructed the missing links of Indian history, and made the Indians conscious of their glorious past. European savants gave a powerful impetus to the study of oriental philosophy and classics. The remarkable efflorescence of the modern Indian vernacular literatures was inspired and shaped by the European cultural influences of this period. Indian poetry, drama, and fiction underwent a process of modernization, and found a new orientation as a result of the impact of Europe on the Indian mind. The growth of the scientific spirit was also a consequence of the new education that opened the way to the sciences and technologies of the West. This many-sided cultural awakening stimulated progress in all spheres of life—economics, industries, society, art, science, literature, and philosophy. In short, British rule, despite its inherently conservative and mundane character, set in motion new creative forces in every domain of our national life. It may thus well be likened to the indispensable burning of the stubble as a prelude to the next crop.

This bird's-eye view of the cultural influences of British rule shows the steady reorientation of Indian life and thought under the pressure of alien ideas. These influences were both positive and negative, and they operated both in the moral and material fields. The story of these diverse influences sums up the basic trends of modern Indian history. This history has its lights and shades, for India has been moulded in different ways in different periods of British rule. The Indians entered the arena of the modern world in a mood of frustration. They began by aping the West. The early products of English education, in their first flush of enthusiasm for Western culture, paid almost fetishistic reverence to all that was glittering in the Western way of life, and this craze for imitation assumed at times ludicrous proportions. The so-called 'Babu' represents this phase of cultural mimicry and intellectual slavery. A reaction against this slavish imitation of the West did not take long time to come, for modern India was soon tired of this new 'Babu' culture, and realized the futility of merely copying the West. Young India was dismayed under the weight of the new shackles of cultural bondage, and so gradually sought emancipation therefrom. This feeling of self-consciousness gave birth to aggressive Hindu and Muslim revivalist movements. India then became conscious of its ancient spiritual legacy and began to denounce the materialism of the West. Again, political and economic discontent accentuated this cleavage between India and the West, and deepened the cultural conflict between the two.

Divergent sentiments, however, soon dominated the cultural outlook of modern India. One was represented by Rabindranath Tagore, according to whom the problem of Indian culture is, in fact, the problem of the world culture in miniature. The India that Tagore envisaged is one which cannot be restricted by the fetters of nationalism or any other ism. This India is said to be marching in quest of a higher ideal of universal brotherhood which shall be for the gain of all humanity. The other school of thought represented by Vivekananda and Dayananda who, however, differed in their methods, strove for the self-expression of India's own spiritual voice and genius for the salvation of the whole world. This spiritual revivalism has steadily developed since the latter part of the last century, and re-vivified by the intellectual and philosophic asceticism of Sri Aurobindo Ghose in our own times, forms the basis of an intensely patriotic conception of Indian culture and India's spiritual mission. Yet another school of thought was represented by Mahatma Gandhi through his gospel of peace, moral force, and *ahimsā*. His insistence on spiritual faith and moral regeneration marks a way of thought which free India and the world have yet to digest and assimilate. These divergent ways of thinking have necessarily created confusion in the Indian outlook which we can resolve in the light of our own traditions and ideals alone. Free India will, after all, have to stand on her own legs, politically as well as culturally.

The Indian mind which successfully stood the challenge of Western culture in the last century is now called upon to bridge the gulf between the old village system and the new technocracy, and between the ancient spirituality and the modern cults of force and real politics. British rule introduced to India the industrial civilization and commercial culture of the West with all the attendant evils thereof, but it attempted no harmonious fusion of the Indian and the Western ways of life. The inevitable consequence of this failure has brought about a maladjustment of the two, which has caused all the ills of separatism, reactionism, and communalism. India today is on the threshold of a new re-birth. The cultural problems that lie ahead of her may not be easy of solution, but free India, we all hope and pray, will eventually adjust her age-old culture to modern conditions of industrialism and nationalism, and evolve a synthetic culture which will be her distinctive contribution to world-thought and world-culture.

RE-SPIRITUALIZATION

By Mr. E. Sales

In the present materialistic world India remains the great hope for the maintenance and the further spread of spirituality. In fact the subcontinent is one of its cradles and still its very home. And being spiritual does not mean only to withdraw from the world. Spirituality can be part of everyday life and that of every man. It can help one and all to have a better existence in the moral as well as in the social field. Spirituality in India is still a mighty and beautiful temple reposing on two principal pillars : the *avatāras* with the religious tradition of the *ṛṣis* and, further, the profound religious feeling of the people.

The evolution of the modern world set out from the Occident. There it gained momentum, after the Renaissance and Galileo, by the development of the mathematical sciences, and it was helped later on by the industrial revolution of the 18th and the 19th centuries. This industrial revolution was followed in our times by automation and the new atomic industries.

Today the whole world is under the spell of modern industrialization. India got first acquainted with it under the British rule. Many people thought that mechanization and technology only could bring the real progress in life. This might prove a terrible mistake, specially so for India.

In fact India, even before liberation and at the moment of its independence, was already divided internally between the modern trends of technical life and the ancient conceptions of the land. This was a serious handicap and could become still a greater one in its material progress. The West itself was under the grip of this same division between technical or material forces and higher aspirations, though not exactly as India, despite alike reasons and aims. However, in the West mechanical noise and over-industrialization almost drowned the voices of those who aspired for higher values. In this respect, India was in a better position.

India most certainly must have its own industries. This is important. But it is equally important, and still more so, to know how to rebuild spirituality in this very frame of the new industrialized society.

II

There is no doubt that India actually lives in a transitional period. She is seeking her way, but this alone constitutes already the first step towards a new solution. Under the British rule the country and the people have made a long and strenuous effort to become free and independent. It is quite natural that immediately after the independence signs of a certain fatigue should become apparent. And it would certainly be a mistake to think that the fact of independence alone meant victory. It was only the first condition and the first indispensable step for a new evolution in India and the blossoming of its best qualities.

Certainly, after liberation the spiritual forces gained momentum. But now they had to face the growing influence of industrialization and the mounting economic and social problems. New working masses were assembling around the new industrial centres. They became detached from their homes and people. This fact presented new and important difficulties. In certain stratas of society wealth was spreading. Even the petty workers gained their living very conveniently. The industrialization created new goods, offered many new commodities. They attracted the attention of the people and distracted them from other things. A Western writer on sociology speaks of the 'Europeanization of the world'. He means by this that almost automatically the whole world will come under the predominating influence of the new industrialized society of the West and its conceptions.

III

It is needless to repeat that these problems are far more acute in the West. But it might be interesting even for India to know how the West views these problems and difficulties. Let us choose for this purpose three outstanding Western personalities, all three eminent authors. There is Freyer on the sociological side and there are Guardini on the religious side and Teilhard de Chardin on the theobiological side. And what they are saying about these problems concerns the whole modern evolution. Chardin, a well-known French Jesuit and scientist (paleontology) is of the opinion that the evolution of the intellect or mind will tend, by the growth of populations and their consciousness, to arrive automatically at a still more diversified and higher degree. There remains the pre-condition of a synthesis of all the existing forces in human life, but Chardin is optimistic about this, too. To him the greater number of men together with the evolutionary advance of the intellect is an absolute guarantee for the wider spread of the spirit, thus even creating an overabundance. Generally speaking, Chardin aims at reconciling science with religion. On the basis of his own profound knowledge of paleontology and biology, he undertakes to show that both could advance hand in hand.[1] This fact is certainly specially interesting for India, since Vedānta also aims at this co-ordination, sustaining spirituality in practical life and simultaneously inspiring scientific research. Guardini, from Italy but living in Munich, is a deeply religious man. He is perfectly aware of the shrinking influence of the Spirit in this mechanized modern world, specially in the West. But he hopes that under the pressure from outside the remaining spiritual forces will become stronger and stronger, so that finally they might be able to vanquish the darkness around and communicate a new light to their surroundings.[2] So far Guardini, too, seems rather optimistic.

With Freyer this is not quite the same. He is a writer on sociology; he is neither a naturalist, nor a religious or a purely philosophical thinker. He is concerned with the structure of the society of men. He is of opinion that this society is now completely dominated by what he calls the 'secondary system' which, following him by its over-organization, had lost every connection with the original creative forces of mankind. This evolution provokes the separation of men from mother earth and even from their next human neighbour. The activities of man become purely mechanical and his function in this world is a purely numerical one. Frayer expresses the fear that this 'secondary system' might get the upper hand. He agrees that organization today is a strict necessity, just as the traffic police is in the street crowded with cars and people. But he does not see, as he says himself, 'how primary forces could be able again to retransform the world into a more human one', closely connected as it is with its basic creative nature. He deplores that this 'secondary system' is in fact spreading all over the world, taking hold of vast masses of men. Furthermore, this same system penetrates also the non-European countries. Frayer says: 'This "secondary system" is on the way to become the new law for all living beings on earth, just as if all had to submit to a common destiny'. And further: '... every progress of the actual human civilization seems to be from now on a progress of Europeanization of the world.'[3]

IV

These facts can scarcely be denied. It is true that up to now India as a whole remains a profoundly religious country, but finally even India might suffer from the further extension of one-sided evolution. This would be a tremendous loss. India offered an enormous help to the whole world in this last century through Sri Ramakrishna and his active and modern-minded other self, Swami Vivekananda. Today many voices of outstanding men in India insist upon strengthening of the spiritual forces. Others emphasize that Gandhi surely did not liberate India by his handlooms to become as quickly and completely as possible an industrial nation. But industry, work, and spirituality do not exclude one or the other. Physical existence never eliminates the spiritual one. The physical existence is only the frame-work for our spiritual lives. Industrial activities have to be considered and evaluated in this way. Many say that spiritual modernization could no longer be done through *brahmacarya* and *guru*-hood. But the truth is that it cannot certainly be achieved otherwise.

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[1] Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Phénomèna Humain*, Editions du Sevil, Paris.

[2] Romano Guardini, *Ende der Newzeit*, Werbund-Verlag, Wurzburg.

[3] Hans Freyer, *Theorie des Gegenwärtigen Zeitalters*, Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, Stuttgart.

Now it will not suffice to speak about these things. Nowhere is there more need for practical application than with spirituality. Lamentations about the splendour of past times are of no avail. We all in the East and the West have together to create the conditions for a new and better life. The great word is: to serve man. This is the word of Swami Vivekananda. To serve man, so that everyone may be able to develop one's life, cultivate social, human, and spiritual values, so that mankind may return to its eternal forces, the vital unity embracing peoples, deeds and thoughts, actions and prayers.

And is not the centenary of the birth of Swami Vivekananda the best opportunity to remind us all over the world of this dire necessity?

No one could have been more able than Swami Vivekananda in his vigorous and inspired words and actions to show the course leading to the practicalization of spirituality. He says: 'He who has served and helped a poor man, seeing Śiva in him without thinking of his caste or creed or race or anything, with him Śiva is more pleased than He is with the man who sees Him only in temples.' And, really, could there be a more efficient and at the same time more modern means to serve spirituality and to help man to better and worthier conditions of life? Is there any better way than this shown by Vivekananda to make spirituality practical on earth and help the poor to participate in God?

All this looks very simple, but it is not an easy task. 'Are you unselfish?' asks Vivekananda. 'That is the question. If you are, you will be perfect without reading a single religious book, without going into a single church or temple.' And he specifies how things have to be done and in which spirit: 'It is our privilege to be allowed to be charitable, for only so can we grow. The poor man suffers that he may be helped. Let the giver kneel down and give thanks; let the receiver stand up and permit. See the Lord back of every being and give to him.'

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND NEO-MONASTICISM

By Swami Gitananda

In the year 1886 a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna once expressed his desire to distribute some ochre clothes to the *sannyāsins* going to the fair of 'Ganga Sagar'—where the Gaṅgā loses herself in the embrace of the ocean. Sri Ramakrishna, pointing to his boy-devotees, told him: 'Where will you find better *sannyāsins* than these young men?' Accordingly, he brought some ochre clothes and *rudrākṣa mālās* to Sri Ramakrishna and requested him to distribute them himself among his young devotees. Sri Ramakrishna then bestowed them on eleven of his future *sannyāsin*-disciples. Though at that time they were mere boys, living with their families, his divining eyes could penetrate deep into their mental realm and find in them the seeds of renunciation. He knew that one day they would bring peace to thousands of world-afflicted people. Thus Sri Ramakrishna himself started the nucleus of the future monastic Order to be named after him.

Sri Ramakrishna was quite aware of his mission in life. The truth he realized through his long and strenuous spiritual discipline had to be broadcast for the good of the world. The flow of his thought-current had to be continued, his ideal of the life and the world had to be propagated 'for the good of the many' through a band of all-renouncing men.

During the last days of his life, Sri Ramakrishna gave detailed instructions to Narendra Nath (later, Swami Vivekananda), the foremost of his young disciples, about their future life. He made him the leader of the small group of young men, who in time were to carry the torch of his (Sri Ramakrishna's) realizations and the spiritual thought of India, to the farthest corners of the world.

After the passing away of their Master these potential spiritual giants, living in the dilapidated Baranagore monastery, immersed themselves in the practice of spiritual discipline, oblivious of the comforts of the physical world, like the orthodox Hindu monks. Even in those early days one could find the distinctive characteristics of this group of young *sannyāsins*. Though belonging to one of the sects established by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya for the practice of the non-dual aspect of Truth, these young men, apart from their contemplation and meditation, sometimes indulged in dancing and chanting the name of Hari like the Vaiṣṇavas, and at other times read and discussed the life and teachings of Jesus Christ like devout Christians. This catholicity of thought, even in the practice of spiritual discipline, was mostly due to the influence of their Master Sri Ramakrishna who, from his own life-experience used to say, 'One should not think, "My religion alone is the right path and other religions are false". God can be realized by means of all paths. It is enough to have sincere yearning for God. Infinite are the paths and infinite the opinions'. With this idea as the background, Swami Vivekananda, then called Narendra Nath, took charge of the young novitiates and inspired them to realize the Truth even in this very life. Thus fired with renunciation, many of them left the Baranagore monastery and roamed about the sacred places of India. Even Narendra Nath himself could not resist this urge, and he tore himself off from his brother-disciples to begin his great journey in order to re-discover his motherland. His feet covered with the dust of the roads, he was one among the thousands of nameless wandering monks, till he became a world-figure at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago.

Now let us have a peep into the mental make-up of Swami Vivekananda and know how it was cast in the die of Sri Ramakrishna to make him a leader of the monastic Order. In the year 1900, when Swamiji was staying in Brittany, he paid a visit with some of his friends to Mont Saint Michael. There were some dungeon-like caves, where captives were isolated in the mediaeval period. While seeing those small caves, Swamiji was heard to utter within himself, 'What a wonderful place for meditation!' And at another time he said, 'Oh! I know I have wandered over the whole earth, but in India I have looked for nothing save the cave in which to meditate'. This was the real Vivekananda, seeking to remain immersed in meditation. But that was not to be. By the will of Sri Ramakrishna his was not the life of a recluse, shut away from the agonies of the people. One day at Cossipore garden-house, Narendra Nath had the experience of *nirvikalpa samādhi*, the highest spiritual state where the duality of life melts away. Regaining consciousness, he came to Sri Ramakrishna, when the latter said: 'Now you have seen everything. But this experience of yours will remain under lock and key, till you finish the work of the Mother'. Sri Ramakrishna did not allow him to remain in spiritual inebriation, but dragged him down to this mundane plane for the good of the world. One day, however, when he requested Sri Ramakrishna to bestow on him the state of constant *samādhi*, Sri

Ramakrishna became rather agitated and said: 'Fie on you! I thought you would be like a big banian tree and thousands of world-afflicted people would take shelter under your shade. But like a selfish man, you want to remain immersed in the bliss of *samādhi!* Look here, there is a higher state than *samādhi* and by the grace of the Mother, you will attain that state. You will see God in every being'.

During the days of wandering throughout the length and breadth of the country, Swami Vivekananda came in close touch with the masses of India—the princes and the peasants, the rich and the poor, the high caste Brahmins and the pariahs. From these contacts, he received such education that he did not get from the university or from the libraries. He had before him the picture of the real India, poor and downtrodden but rich in her spiritual heritage. Seeing their poverty and the injustice of the so-called men of high castes, sometimes he could not restrain his tears. It is this suffering of the poor masses of India, and the basic spirituality of her people, that metamorphosed his whole outlook on religious life. Just before going to America he gave vent to this feeling of his in these poignant words: 'I have now travelled all over India . . . But alas, it was agony to me, my brothers, to see with my own eyes the terrible poverty and misery of the masses, and I could not restrain my tears. It is now my firm conviction that it is futile to preach religion amongst them without first trying to remove their poverty and their sufferings. It is for this reason—to find more means for the salvation of the poor of India—that I am now going to America'.

The advent of Swami Vivekananda was mainly a gift from the Highest for the good of the world. His was the task of awakening spirituality in the minds of men and women engrossed in worldly affairs. He was the awakener of souls. But when he actually wanted to begin this work, to spread the grand ideas of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads to the masses, he came in contact with a dismaying India—poor, ignorant and afflicted. He understood that it was futile to preach religion to those who had not even the bare necessities of life. 'An empty stomach is no good for religion'. Therefore, before preaching religion, he must first prepare the ground for its reception. It is for this reason, to prepare the masses for a higher ideal of life, that he talked of independence of India, of the spread of education, and of social reform.

The idea of a monastic missionary organization was not a new thing in India. Long before Christianity, the Buddhist missionaries went to various countries to preach the path of *nirvāṇa*. Even in the inscriptions of Aśoka, we find that he established in various places hospitals for giving medicines and serving the afflicted, including the animals. Even Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, in those days when there were no facilities of transport, established Maths and centres of learning throughout India, right up to the Himalayas. Thus we find from quite early times the organization of missionary institutions undertaking both the activities of disseminating the higher ideals of life and of catering to the material needs of the world. While staying in America Swami Vivekananda was much impressed by the amount of good work done there by organized institutions. He once told that in America he had the greatest temptation of his life and that was founding an organization. But he was not sure if a similar organization would thrive on Indian soil also. He thought much about the right type of organization, which would be suited to the Indian need and to the best advantage of the masses. Perhaps this can be said that Western organized work gave Swami Vivekananda impetus to start a monastic organization in India.

In Europe and America, he saw that people were materially well off, but poor in spirituality. That was why, it occurred to him, so much of material prosperity had not been able to bring peace to them; whereas he found India poor materially, though rich in spirituality. So he advocated a mutual adjustment for the good of both the hemispheres. India should teach her philosophy and spirituality to the Western people, and in exchange learn their knowledge of science, technology, economics, and social reform.

Thus Swami Vivekananda was led to organize a monastic institution, which would carry out his ideas into practice for years to come. Even noble ideas need an organization for their sustained propagation. In 1894, he first gave out this idea in one of his letters to his brother-disciple Swami Ramakrishnananda: 'Suppose some disinterested *sannyāsins*, bent on doing good to others, go from village to village, disseminating education and seeking in various ways to better the condition of all down to the *caṇḍāla*, through oral teaching, and by means of maps, cameras, globes, and such other accessories—can't that bring forth good in time?' In another letter he writes to Swami Akhandananda: 'The *gerua* robe is not for enjoyment. It is the banner of heroic work. You must give your body, mind, and speech to the welfare of the world. You have read "Look upon your mother as God, look upon your father as God," but I say, "the poor, the illiterate, the ignorant, the afflicted—let these be your God. Know that service to these alone is the highest religion".' 'He alone is a child of Sri Ramakrishna who is moved to pity for all creatures and exerts himself for them even at the risk of incurring personal damnation.'

After his return from the West in 1897, Swamiji founded the Ramakrishna Mission and soon several centres of the movement sprang up in different parts of the country. At his behest the monks of the Order took up relief work among famine and flood affected people. The orthodox *sannyāsins* of our country were not used to see *sādhus* in the whirlpool of work—even disinterested work—for the good of others. They were accustomed to a life of seclusion and meditation. So it was a great shock to them when they saw a band of young monks engaged in philanthropic work, serving mostly the householders. Incidentally, though I use the word 'philanthropy', it is not really so in the eyes of the monks of the Ramakrishna Order, since that word generally presupposes an air of superiority—giving help to inferior people. Their idea of service is to worship God in the form of humanity, and thereby gain spiritually. In the words of Swami Vivekananda: 'Let the giver kneel down and give thanks and let the receiver stand up and permit'. This was a novel idea.

Now it may be asked: Is this Order of monks organized by Swami Vivekananda a new sect of *sannyāsins*, completely different from or antagonistic to the orthodox monks? The answer is definitely a negative one, since the monks of the Ramakrishna Order, following Sri Ramakrishna himself who was invested with *sannyāsa* by Tota Puri, belong to one of the ten denominations of the *sannyāsins* founded by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, and the orthodox *sannyāsins* acknowledge this fact. So far as the monastic vows and rules are concerned, there is absolutely no difference between the age-old *sannyāsins* and the monks of this new Order. Only Swami Vivekananda infused some modern ideas in his organization, in conformity with the needs of the country. He made Hinduism dynamic by his re-orientation of the religious ideas, and this gave a new impetus to it.

Some other monastic organizations doing altruistic work can be found throughout the world. Their commendable work in the field of spreading education among the backward classes and giving medical aid to the afflicted need hardly be overemphasized. Their service to humanity rests on the idea of compassion. But there is a little difference in the idea of service inculcated by Swami Vivekananda. To him service is itself worship. Long before, at Dakshineshwar, one day a conversation on the main tenets of the Vaiṣṇava faith was going on in the presence of Sri Ramakrishna. Now Sri Ramakrishna uttering the Vaiṣṇava saying 'compassion to all beings', entered into *samādhi*, and soon after regaining outward consciousness, gave expression to the outcome of his spiritual experience: 'Who are you to bestow compassion on beings? It is not compassion but service to all, looking upon all as veritable manifestations of God'. Swami Vivekananda, then Narendra Nath, was moved by the profundity of this grand thought. This idea of serving all as God Himself took root in his mind, and inspired him all through his life. Being a *sannyāsin,* and regarding the world as illusory, like a dream, in the orthodox fashion, he could have withdrawn himself from the suffering millions and passed his days in the 'idleness of God', like many monks of India. But his all-embracing love for the afflicted people would not allow him to be a passive observer of the miseries of his fellow beings. This is clearly reflected in one of his letters where he says: '. . . May I be born again and again, and suffer thousands of miseries so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum total of all souls—and above all, my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races, of all species, is the special object of my worship'.

The whole philosophy of work—doing good to others and so forth—rests on this grand idea of serving God in different forms. So Swami Vivekananda defined the twin motto of the new monastic Order as 'For the good of one's own self and for the good of the world'. This new idea of monasticism slowly gained approval in society and also in the fold of orthodox *sannyāsins.* The work of the organization since its inception grew steadily and now, after sixty years of Swamiji's passing away, it has become a world-wide organization with branches all over India and in many foreign countries. Various types of work such as medical service, educational work, work for women, rural uplift, and work among the labour and backward classes, etc. are now being conducted through these different centres of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. The monks of the Order are also carrying the message of India to countries far and near, to the appreciation of their peoples. As a result, some youths even in Europe and America have dedicated their lives for the noble cause promulgated by Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Vivekananda discarded the 'frog in the well' attitude, particularly in the realm of religion, in order to bring new light from the world outside. The three Ācāryas (religious teachers)—Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, and Madhva—have interpreted Truth from the standpoints of Advaita (non-dualism), Viśiṣṭādvaita (qualified non-dualism), and Dvaita (dualism) respectively, each claiming his philosophy to be *the* correct, and thus giving rise to differences among their followers. But it was left to Swami Vivekananda to synthesize, in keeping with his great master's life and teaching, all these philosophies and declare from his own experience that they were complementary and not contradictory. They are indeed the three stages, so to say, in the process of realizing one and the same Truth. He said: 'All of religion is contained in the Vedānta, that is, in the three stages of the Vedānta philosophy—the Dvaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, and Advaita. One comes after the other. These are the three stages of spiritual growth in man. Each one is necessary'.

Sitting at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna, he had learnt that there could never be one rule of spiritual practice for all individuals. People varied according to their propensities and mental developments. Truth can be realized through any one of the paths of *jñāna* (knowledge), *karma* (action), *yoga* (control of the mind), and *bhakti* (devotion). Swamiji, however, wanted that a development in the right proportion of all these should be practised by the monks of the Ramakrishna Order. He prescribed that 'the object of this Math is to form characters combining *jñāna, bhakti, yoga,* and *karma,* and all the spiritual disciplines that are necessary for that end will be accepted as the *sādhanās* of this Math'. Again, he wanted that the monks of the Order should have some knowledge of general science and at the same time be efficient enough to explain the abstruse passages of the scriptures. Addressing his disciples, he once declared: 'You must try to combine in your life immense idealism with immense practicality. You must be prepared to go into deep meditation now, and the next moment you must be ready to go and cultivate the fields'.

With such objects in view, Swami Vivekananda established the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. He pointed out: 'Only a great monk can be a great worker, for he is without attachment—there are no greater workers than Buddha and Christ. No work is secular. All work is adoration and worship'.

Admonishing one of his disciples who wanted to remain absorbed in *samādhi,* he thundered: 'Why? What is the use of remaining always stupified in *jaḍasamādhi*? Under the inspiration of non-dualism why not sometimes dance like Śiva, and sometimes remain immersed in super-consciousness? Who enjoys a delicacy more—he who eats it all by himself, or he who shares it with others? Granted, by realizing Ātman in meditation you attain *mukti*: but of what use is that to the world? We have to take the whole world with us to *mukti.* We shall set a conflagration in Mahāmāyā's domain'.

Of himself he said: 'It may be that I shall find it good to get outside my body—to cast it off like a worn out garment. But I shall not cease to work. I shall inspire men everywhere until the world shall know that it is one with God'.

This is how the illustrious Swami Vivekananda, whose birth centenary is being observed throughout the globe, planted neo-monasticism on the sacred soil of India 'for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many'.

THE CONCEPTION OF GODDESS DURGĀ THROUGH THE AGES

By Professor Rabindra Kumar Siddhantashastree

The conception of the Śakti cult or the idea of a goddess, believed to be the mother or originator of this universe, dates back to remote antiquity. This is evident from some carvings and dolls found during excavations at Harappa and Mohenjodaro as well as from some mythologies of ancient Greece and Rome.

There is ample evidence that Durgā, the popular Goddess of the Hindus, even in the remote past had been worshipped not only in different parts of India, but even beyond the boundary of this vast subcontinent. In the days of earliest antiquity, the Hindus believed that goddess Durgā, in some form or other, used to be worshipped with great devotion by the gods in different regions of heaven and even by the dwellers of the nether world. The conception of the said Goddess, as found in ancient Indian literature, varies in respect of time, place, and occasion.

It is not possible to point to a particular period in which the conception of the said Goddess originated. Even in the oldest records of Indian lore, references to some conception of the Goddess are found in beautiful words. One hymn of the *Ṛg-Veda* (VIII. 3.12) is virtually a prayer to the said Goddess, in which the Divine Mother is called by the very name Durgā and is said to have Her complexion like that of fire. In the same hymn, the Goddess is described as a safe refuge to Her devotees, a bestower of good effects for pious actions and the bearer of a form of radiant effulgence.

In the *Maitrāyaṇī-Saṁhitā* (Madhyama-kāṇḍa: *prapāṭhaka,* 7) of the *Śukla-yajur-Veda,* the same Goddess, though in the names of Gaurī and Girisutā, is found to be meditated upon. In the *Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka* (X. 18) of the *Kṛṣṇa-yajur-Veda* also, reference to the said Goddess, in the names of Umā and

Ambikā, is found. It is noticeable that, in the latter book, the Goddess has been described as the consort of Lord Śiva. In the *Kena Upaniṣad* (III. 12) of the *Sāma-Veda* also, we find some reference to the same Goddess, where She is addressed by the name 'Umā', and is described as a daughter of the Himālayas.

Particulars of the glory and process of worship of goddess Durgā in different names and forms are recorded in the Purāṇa-literature. The *Devīpurāṇa, Devī-Bhāgavata, Kālikāpurāṇa,* and *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* are replete with Her glorious exploits and supernatural deeds. Even in the *Bhāgavata,* the great and undoubtable authority of the Vaiṣṇava cult, this very Goddess is held in high regard. When Lord Kṛṣṇa, the hero of that sacred book happened to fall in a grave danger, His relations and subjects, the dwellers of Dvārakā prayed to goddess Durgā for safe recovery of the Lord. The Goddess, pleased by their devotional prayer, granted safety to the Lord (*Bhāgavata,* X. 56). Even on the occasion of Lord Kṛṣṇa's first advent on earth, active help of the Goddess was considered necessary for the protection of His mortal body. The Goddess is termed here as Yogamāyā. The *gopīs* (milk-women) of Vṛndāvana, for the fulfilment of their desired objects, worshipped the same Goddess sometimes in the name of *Kātyāyanī,* and on other occasions, in the name of Mahāmāyā or Mahāyoginī (*Bhāgavata,* X. 22.4).

It is noticeable that in the *Bhāgavata* (VI. 19.6), the Goddess is described as a consort of Lord Viṣṇu instead of Lord Śiva. The *Bhāgavata* admits that Durgā, the Divine Mother, is worshipped at different places by different people at least under fourteen different names and forms. These different names of the Goddess, as recorded in the *Bhāgavata* (X. 2.10-12) are: Durgā, Bhadrakālī, Vijayā, Vaiṣṇavī, Kumudā, Caṇḍikā, Kṛṣṇā, Mādhavī, Kanyakā, Māyā, Nārāyaṇī, Īśānā, Śāradā, and Ambikā.

In the *Brahmavaivartapurāṇa, Devī-Bhāgavata,* and some other books of the Purāṇa literature, the Divine Mother is said to have five different functions of high prominence for the creation of this universe, inclusive of its constituents, both animate and inanimate. In each of Her said functions, the Divine Mother is called by a different name. The five different names given to the Goddess in this connection are Durgā, Rādhā, Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, and Sāvitrī. The special function of Durgā is to protect a devotee from grave dangers, that of Rādhā to remove his worldly attractions, and of Lakṣmī to give him immense wealth. Sarasvatī bestows knowledge and intelligence upon a devotee, and Sāvitrī paves the way for his salvation.

Not only in the Vedas and Purāṇas, but in other ancient books as well, references to the the worship of Durgā are found. Rāma, the hero of the great epic of Vālmīki, is said to have worshipped the Goddess for securing Her favour in his terrible battle with the demon-king Rāvaṇa. In the Virāṭaparvan of the *Mahābhārata,* we find Yudhiṣṭhira, the hero of the epic, praying to the Goddess just before his departure for *ajñātavāsa* (living incognito in exile). The author of the book, on the latter occasion, calls the Goddess as 'Durgā', and describes Her as the controller of the three different worlds (*Durgām tribhuvaneśvarīm*).

Even in later days, references to the worship of goddess Durgā in different names and forms are found in several books. *Caṇḍimaṅgal,* a Bengali book of the sixteenth century A.D., is replete with the description of the super-natural power of the Goddess. There are many other books of less prominence on the subject.

From the *Ādyāstotra,* a popular poem in praise of goddess Durgā, called Ādyā, we know that worship of the Goddess was not limited to the boundaries of India only; but She used to be worshipped in other parts of the globe as well. The author of the hymn devotionally holds that, even in different parts of heaven, the same Goddess is worshipped by the divinities as well. In the same poem it has been maintained that, in different parts of heaven and earth, as well as in the nether world, goddess Durgā is worshipped in various names and forms. In the regions of the gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Indra, and Varuṇa, the Divine Mother is worshipped respectively in the names of Brahmāṇī, Sarvamaṅgalā, Indrāṇī and Ambikā. In the nether world, She is called Vaiṣṇavī. In the region of the god of death, the same Goddess exists with Her terrible form known as Kālarūpā. In the kingdom of the god Kubera, She assumes the form of divine beauty.

On this earth of ours, beyond the boundaries of India, as well as in the provinces of this country, the Divine Mother—according to our old books—is worshipped in Her different names and forms as given below. In the islands that stand in the south-eastern direction of India, the Goddess is worshipped in the name of Mahānandā. In the regions beyond the north-eastern border of India, people worship the Goddess as Mṛgavāhinī (the goddess riding a lion). In the countries of south-western direction, She is worshipped by the people in Her name and form of Raktadantā (goddess having rows of red teeth). In the regions outside the border of north-eastern India, the Goddess is found to be worshipped in the name and form of Śūladhāriṇī (goddess with a spear in her hand). In Ceylon, She is styled as Devamohinī, and in the Coral islands, as Surasā. In Laṅkā or the capital of Ceylon, people call Her Bhadrakālī. In Setubandha (on the southern coast of India), where Rāma is said to have started building a bridge to Ceylon, the Goddess is worshipped in the name of Rāmeśvarī. In places known as Puruṣottama, Orissa, Nīla-mountain, Bengal, Oudh, Vārāṇasī, Gayā, Kurukṣetra, Vraja (Vṛndāvana), Dvārakā, and Mathurā, the goddess Durgā is worshipped respectively in the names of Vimalā, Virajā, Kāmākhyā, Kālikā, Maheśvarī, Annapūrṇā, Gayeśvarī, Bhadrakālī, Kātyāyanī, Mahāmāyā, and Maheśvarī.

The *Matsya-sūkta*, a renowned book of remote antiquity, records in clear language in which part of India and in what form the Divine Mother was accepted by the people for the purpose of worshipping Her. From this book, we know that the form of the Goddess with eight hands was installed in different parts of Orissa, Kalinga, Central Provinces, Oudh, and Saurāṣṭra. In some other parts of the country, viz. Cachar, Sylhet, Kosala, Śabavallaka, and the high regions of the Mahendra and Himalaya mountains, the Goddess was worshipped in Her form with eighteen hands. In the regions of Kurukṣetra, Mathurā, Kedāra, Rāmaṭha, Makaranda, and Virāṭa (modern Jaipur), the images of the Goddess were found to have twelve hands. A ten-handed image was worshipped in the regions of Kaumāra, Gaura, Pāripātra, southern provinces, Mahārāṣṭra, and Hastināpura. In the districts of Pūrṇa (Purnia?), Nepal, Kathiawar, and Konkan, the image of the Goddess had four hands. In the coastal districts of southern and western India Her image with two hands only was made.

Not only by the Āryan people, but even by some tribes of non-Āryan origin, goddess Durgā in different names and forms is found to be worshipped with much devotion. For example, we may mention the Santals of Bihar and Bengal and the Śabaras (popularly known as Saoras), Praja-Bhuyans, and Raj-Koli-Bhuyans of Orissa in this respect. During the festival of Durgā-worship, the Santals put on new clothes and celebrate the occasion with their popular songs and dances. The Śabaras call the Goddess 'Drugasum' instead of Durgā and worship Her with much pomp. The name given to the Goddess by the Bhuyans of Orissa is 'Paurī Devī', which is undoubtedly an abbreviation of the term Annapūrṇā Devī, by which name She is worshipped at the great temple of Vārāṇasī. By some other tribes of non-Āryan origin, the Divine Mother is found to be worshipped in some other names and forms.

It is thus clear that the conception and worship of the Divine Mother originated in the immemorial past, and the Goddess Herself has all along been very very popular within and outside India amongst the different Āryan and non-Āryan people.

VIVEKANANDA AND THE INDIAN RENAISSANCE

By Dr. Braj Lal Goswami

A study of Indian history reveals that whenever there has been a resurgence of new life in this country, it has anchored itself in spiritual principles. During the Mughal times we see the religious figure of saint Ram Das looming behind the Maratha armies. The will to resist evil in the Sikh Gurus was girded and steeled by a recognition of the first principles of religion. Our struggle against the British rule reveals the same pattern of ideation and action. Aurobindo, Tilak, and Gandhi are rooted in the soil of Indian spirituality and derive their nutriment from it. The reason for this is obvious. This appeal to the first principles means that our action has moral backing, that we are but instruments wielded by a higher reality that is weaving the fabric of history. This appeal to spirituality has its dangers when spirituality shrinks to the dimensions of a dogma or a sectarian tradition. The red pages of history bear witness to many outrages committed in the name of God. But one unique characteristic of Indian spirituality has been that it does not stand or fall by any dogma; it is not committed to any creed or article of faith. It can accommodate theists and atheists—'people of all religious persuasions and of none.' This means that Indian spirituality embraces a wider range of experiences and attitudes than those of which religion in its Western connotation takes account.

Indian spirituality is a variegated pattern. Will, feeling, and thought, all contribute to the integrity of this rich tapestry. But like individuals, nations, too, are led uphill and downdale in their journey through time; they too know the smiles and frowns of fortune. There have been times when we have identified the essence of the spiritual life with mere thought or feeling. This has often led to disaster. Particularly during the mediaeval times we failed to recognize the importance of action in the proper conduct of life. Of course, even during those times India gave birth to great thinkers, soldiers, and religious leaders, but the nation as a whole remained irresponsive to the call of the Spirit, the nature of God in us as the Eternal Worker, the Mover of the wheels of history.

Vivekananda, in our own times, came to remind us that God is not merely a thinker whose thought has become incarnate in the orderly workings of the Cosmos; He is not merely a lover who knits the world together and quickens Nature to unfold itself in the tenderness of flowers, the song of birds and the lyrics of the human lover; He is also a worker and pathfinder, under whose superintendence Nature rises from the sleep of unconsciousness and recovers her true being in the vision of sages and saints. Since the human spirit is made of the nature of God, man too has to realize his triple status as thinker, lover, and worker.

According to Vivekananda, Vedānta is not a philosophy for the weak. 'This Self cannot be discovered by the weak' says the Upaniṣad. The tragedy of Indian philosophical tradition during the mediaeval ages consists in this that while we see many great souls standing on the snow-clad summits of Vedānta, its streams failed to irrigate the soil of the common mind. Vivekananda came as the exponent of practical Vedānta. Vedānta is not the refuge of those who seek a shelter from the stresses of life. It is not a tissue of airy abstractions. It is not the luxury of arm-chair philosophers. It is not a badge of imbecility won by those who have gone down in the battle of life nor is it the begging-bowl of the monk. Only souls that have seen life both in its heights and depths can breathe in the rarefied atmosphere of this philosophy. Vivekananda, however, noticed the prevailing weakness of Indian religiosity, the proneness of the then Indian mind to idle speculation. Idle speculation is the pastime of those who are victims of the repetitive mechanism of the psyche. Hence he cautioned us against it, and exhorted us to be up and doing.

The essence of Vedānta consists in the mastery of the mind. Only the brave can do that. Vedānta is, indeed, the crown of Indian thought. It is her national philosophy. But it was no longer accessible in its authentic form to the masses. It had come to be identified with pallid negativism. To attain Brahman, the fundamental reality, it was considered imperative that one should remain altogether aloof from the concerns of the world, indifferent to its ecstasies and agonies, frozen to immobility. If the human soul wanted to come to fulfilment it had to shed its involvements as so many irrelevancies. The world, according to this view, was a blunder which the Divine has come to perpetrate in an unguarded moment.

There is no question that such an interpretation of Vedānta is a travesty of truth. The Vedānta does not cancel the world as a blunder. There has, no doubt, been a tradition for which the world is a magic show, projected by the powers of the Divine. But here, too, this tradition is emphatic that if the world is unreal, it is so only for him who has deflated the bubble of the ego and come to realize his identity with the Divine. It does not lie in the mouth of the man in the street to rate the world as unreal when it has such a grip on his life and can arouse hopes and desires shot through with the iridiscence of passion. The fundamental insight of Vedānta which Vivekananda affirmed was that Brahman is here and now and the world as we know it is not a booby-trap but a stairway. Vedānta maps out the path for the pilgrim soul. Each stage of the past is true, although in relation to the higher level, from the eminence of an ampler realization, it can be regarded as less true.

The synthetic Vedānta which Vivekananda preached is very catholic in its outlook. It leaves no man in the outer chill; it invites all to come and warm themselves before the fire of the Divine. The Divine rejects no sincere approach. Knowledge, love, and action can all serve as transport to the Divine. Vivekananda spoke and wrote a good deal about the paths of knowledge and love, but his main emphasis was on action. Vivekananda himself was a dynamic personality and his espousal of action as the road *par excellence* to the Divine was a timely corrective to the pack of negations with which Vedānta had come to be identified. Ancient India knew this road, but during the middle ages it fell into disrepair. It is good that the dawn of Indian renascence saw our leaders clearing it of scrub and jungle.

Vivekananda's life and work are a summons to action—action of the highest type. Just as love can become, in the hands of the unwise, mere indulgence in emotions, a rolling about in psychic slush, and just as knowledge can degenerate into packages of itemized information, so, too, action in its travesty of itself becomes a witness not to grace and inner fulfilment but to nervous tension. It loses its sacramental quality and becomes a recipe for relieving boredom. The so called practical man is often a vain dreamer in a hurry, who has no grip either on his nerves or his thought and no intimation of the issues at stake in the life of action. Action is fruitful only if it is rooted in a vision of the verities. Vivekananda warns us against falling into the old rut and re-states the philosophy of action as expounded in the *Gītā*. Action married to wisdom begets the life divine. The knower should bear witness to his knowledge in the arena of action. If the wise man leaves the field of action to the fool for whom the only sanction for action lies in the drive of egoistic desire, then his wisdom has betrayed him. Lifeless thought is as bad as thoughtless life. If the wise man has no faith in his ministry which consists in delivering the intangible goods of the Spirit to society, then society will do well in assigning him a status lower than that of the producer of material goods. Vivekananda trusts in the genuineness of that thought alone which is no fugitive from the strife of action. Unless idea becomes flesh in action it is a vain affection of the mind, like a cheque on a bank in liquidation.

It is only the free in spirit who can act. Action born of freedom is creative. Vivekananda sees no saving grace in blind adherence to custom and convention. The India of his day badly needed this reminder. The creativity of the Indian genius had been strangled by the dead weight of meaningless customs. The Swami observes: 'If living by rule alone ensures excellence, if it be enough to follow strictly the rules and customs handed down through generations, then who is more virtuous than a tree, who is a greater devotee, a holier saint, than a railway engine?' The self-luminous Spirit is the source of all authentication and our customs and conventions are but fire-flies before its winkless light.

Vivekananda strove to wed the spiritual genius of India to the social idealism of the West. Poverty unless it is embraced voluntarily is no index to spirituality. The mute misery of the millions is more eloquent than thunder in interrogating the adequacy of a Vedānta that is confined to books, forests, and caves. He never tires of telling his countrymen that if they do not awaken to the urgency of solving the social problem, the foreigners will mock at their philosophy and religion. Unless it bears fruit both in the life of the individual and that of society, philosophy becomes a sterile manipulation of concepts and religion a complex of dogma, ritual, and hypocrisy.

What is the relevance of Vivekananda to the contemporary Indian scene? It is the relevance of eternal truths to the contingent transactions in time. Unless we refer our actions to the first principles we will remain in bondage to the fancies of the mind, the vagaries of fashion, and the freaks of public opinion. Perhaps we have realized the importance of action because Vivekananda and Tilak lived. But our addiction to action is as remote from the ideal for which the Swami stood as the mediaeval aversion to action. Our actions today are expressions of fidgety nerves and restless minds, because they are not grounded in the first principles. Unless action is integrated with the calm of the Spirit it is worse than inaction. Indian conception of spirituality cannot be confused with Western ideas about cult and religion. While religions are often at war with one another, this spirituality is no more in conflict with activities of the world than space is in conflict with the things it holds. Our conviction that 'business is business, politics is politics' and that they have nothing to do with spiritual life points to deep-seated cleavages in the mind of contemporary man who believes that he has liberated himself from the superstitions of religion, forgetting that in the process he might have delivered himself in bondage to the superstitions of science and fancies of commonsense.

THE DESTINY OF MAN

By Rev. M. Guy Laberge

'What is man that thou art mindful of him?' This question was asked many hundreds of years ago and is still asked today. Before we can possibly know the destiny of man, we must know who and what we are. Man has gone to many authorities to ask that question and every authority has given him a different answer. The materialistic scientist answers that man is about 90% worth chemicals and minerals, that he is but a thinking animal, and like all animals, he is born, he lives, and he dies, and that's the end of it. On the other end of the scale, we find the highest answer—that man is an incarnation of God. Every man must continue to ask this question until the very highest revelation is individually experienced.

We hear many voices all around us attempting to answer this one question. We hear the voice of anthropology telling us that the earliest records of man are found in the Java man, the Pekin man, the Neanderthal man, or the Cro Magnon man. These were supposed to be the very earliest records of man, but like all scientific concepts these, too, have been superseded. They have just dug up the remains of a man who was supposed to have lived on this earth 17,50,000 years ago which is beyond former estimates. They call this discovery the Zinjanthropus man. How accurate are these records? We cannot help but wonder. In Australia, we have at the present time the Australian bushman who closely resembles the stone-age man. What if in a million years from now, they uncovered the remains of such a man and declared that this man lived in the twentieth century? The bushman is far from being a true representative of the twentieth century man. It would certainly be wrong to assume that all men in the twentieth century were like him. How can we know for sure that the same thing has not happened with these recent discoveries? Fortunately, it is not important for us to know, because the real nature of man is not his physical body.

Then there is another voice we have heard for centuries. That voice tells us that man is a sinner by nature and that most of us are destined to an eternity of suffering, unless we accept the story that one man made a supreme sacrifice on the cross and by this act all of humanity was saved. It would be so easy if this story was true. It is certainly true that Jesus went to the cross, but it certainly is not true that he let himself be crucified to satisfy the wrath of an angry God who demanded such a sacrifice. Maybe that is the trouble with many of us, we want the easiest way out, and so we invent stories of vicarious atonements. The mission of Jesus was to demonstrate the real nature of man. He had tried for three years to teach that man was immortal. Finally it must have dawned on him that he would never be believed, and so he had to prove it beyond the shadow of a doubt and this called for the crucifixion. Because of his great act of love, the human race has been impressed so deeply that many are now seeking to follow in his footsteps in self-regeneration.

Jesus did not rely on anyone to do it for him and neither must we rely on anyone else to do it for us. What Jesus demonstrated we, in time, will also demonstrate. A book is not going to save us, a teacher is not going to do it for us. This is often a bitter truth to accept. How dearly we want to rely on the consciousness of the practitioner to bring greater prosperity, better health, or greater harmony! The mission of the real practitioner or teacher is to teach the individual how to do it for himself.

We have begun to hear a new voice on the scene, the voice of modern metaphysics, giving to us in terms we can understand the message of Truth. But metaphysics alone is not going to save us. If we hear and understand this latest voice and do not strive to practise what it teaches in everyday life it will not save us either. It is *we* who must save ourselves. Teachers, books, ministers are but helps along the way. In the final analysis, *we* have to do the work, *we* are the ones who must open up our consciousness to the spirit of Truth. *We* must spend the time in meditation and contemplation. *We* must practise the constructive consciousness in everyday life.

Let us return to our original question. What is man? The highest teaching we have is that man is God made manifest. God has involved Himself within the nature of man. Within him He has planted the seed of perfection. This is not a new discovery. It was taught thousands of years ago.

In Genesis we read: 'God created man in His own image.' In John we read: 'Jesus answered them, is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods?' We look around us but we do not see very many gods walking around. Quite the contrary, we see a lot of devils or what appears to be devils. We cannot pick up a newspaper or turn on a TV set without discovering some inharmony going on somewhere in the world. None of these, however, should move us because what we see or hear with our senses does not reveal the true nature of man. Although there is divinity in every man, not every man has discovered this divinity. Ramakrishna said: 'God is in the heart of every man, but not every man is in the heart of God.' That is to say not everyone is aware that God is present within. What we see reported on the TV screen is but a transitory phase of man's experience. There is much more to reality than what appears to our senses which are constantly deceiving us and not giving us the real picture. Our senses tell us that the edge of a razor is a very straight line but under a microscope it resembles a wavy line drawn by a child. Our senses tell us that a piece of steel is very solid, but the X-ray reveals that it is very porous. Our senses tell us that, when a stick is submerged in water, it appears to be bent and, on a hot summer day the highway appears to be flooded with water, but it is just a mirage. Our senses cannot be relied upon to give us a true picture of man. They cannot possibly reveal to us the Absolute. They can only report to us the relative. If we believe what we hear and what we see as absolute Truth then we are on the wrong track.

The senses are thus constantly deceiving us, preventing us from tuning in to man's real identity. If we believe everything on TV as ultimate reality, then there is bound to be confusion. I know of a person who believes in everything he hears and everything he sees and I think he was the one who made this observation: 'It wasn't too bad when man was at a crossroad, but I don't like these clover-leaf jobs.' The negative reports we hear every day are relatively true. These troubles are existing in the world, but only at a surface level. Under these appearances are great forces at work which we do not see. Just as the headlines from a twenty-year old newspaper do not move us, so the current headlines should not frighten us either.

All these apparent evils are the result of man's ignorance concerning his real nature. Ignorantly he sets into motion mental laws which bring into being such results in accordance with his thinking. The senses reveal that there are many powers at work. Because man believes this, his thinking cannot possibly be constructive, and so man manifests according to his thinking. When man stops believing in the power of evil, evil will disappear from the earth. Ernest Holmes, the founder of Religious Science, put it in these words: 'All apparent evil is the result of ignorance, and will disappear to the degree that it is no longer thought about, believed in, or indulged in. Evil is not a thing in itself. It has no entity and no real law to support it. God is love, and love can have no desire other than to bless all alike, and to express itself through all.'

At this very moment, we are living in the midst of infinite wisdom and infinite love, but our senses do not reveal this to us. At this very moment, in the atmosphere are hundreds of musical vibrations being transmitted by various radio stations. We cannot hear them, because we do not have a radio on. It is not meant for us to pick up these programmes with the senses and neither it is meant for us to pick up the celestial harmonies which are also present here, with just the senses.

We are, however, concerned here with the real nature of man, not with what appears to our senses as man. He is much more than this three-dimensional body. This body is but a vehicle of manifestation. The seed of perfection is within all of us and our destiny is to embody all the perfection that is potentially man's. Let us for ever put out of our minds that man is just a body. Let us forget this over-emphasis on man being a sinner. No good is ever accomplished by condemning man. Let us forget the teaching that man is a fallen creature and see it in its true light. Let us see man rather as a being in the process of becoming an angel, a spiritual son of God.

It is true that a child makes mistakes before becoming a man and it is true that a man makes mistakes before becoming a perfected being. But is the child to be condemned for its shortcomings? Is man to be condemned because he has not yet reached the perfection he is bound to reach? No, but we must all come to the point of understanding that we are liable for our thoughts. All of us understand that, as a man sows, so he reaps. It is very simple. One does not get tomatoes by planting cucumber seeds. One does not sow into this omnipresent mind negation and reap harmony. This much we know. If we are to experience good, we must learn how to think good. This is the great emphasis in Religious Science. We teach this great unfailing law of mind, which brings experiences in accordance with our thinking. If we go out of our way to be loving, love must come into our experience. If we forgive readily we, too, are forgiven for our own shortcomings. Religious Science teaches that God expresses Himself through law. If this was not so, there would be only chaos in the universe. Man likewise expresses through law. He is a free agent. He has planted all kinds of seeds in the garden of his soul. In most cases, he has planted more negative seeds than positive ones. This accounts for all the negative reports on TV of wars, famine, and suffering. No inharmony is ever experienced by any soul, unless some universal law of good has been violated. Man continues to violate, until he finally learns that this law is truly a divine accountant. This is the one law that man cannot avoid.

Eventually man learns this. Just as we are now understanding that this law exists, so will the whole world eventually understand it. We want more good to come into our life, and we are learning how to bring good into our experience unfailingly by dwelling on good.

Understanding this, what is the destiny of man? What eventually happens to a man as a result of making constructive thinking a habit? What happens to a man who has succeeded, after years of effort, to think only constructively? When a man has succeeded in eliminating all negative habits from his subconscious mind—all dislikes, all fear—what happens to such a man? He begins to live a life of grace. His life becomes a heaven on earth. He no longer has to strive to think positively, he no longer has to try to express love, he no longer has to try to be kind, because all of these qualities are being expressed through him automatically. Because he has learned to live in a habitual consciousness of good, only good keeps coming to him. In this consciousness, his expressions are under a higher law with the Christ spirit in charge of his consciousness. He lives a life of peace without striving. He is in constant, intuitive contact with the Christ or his real Self. Man does not ever get away from law, not even in Christ consciousness, but the responsibility has now been turned over to this Christ spirit and only good keeps coming forth.

A man, for instance, works very hard at cultivating strawberries. In the beginning, he must do all the work himself. He has to weed the garden. He has to fertilize the ground. He might have to work from daybreak until sunset to make a success of his crop. Because he has worked hard the first year he can afford to hire a man to help him during the second year. His work is then a little easier but he still has to work and watch everything. In the third year, as a result of his steadfastness, he is able to hire several men. In time he is able to hire a superintendent, a business manager, and many workmen. He eventually comes to the place where his work has become so well organized that he no longer has anything to do with the strawberries, for his workmen are all taking care of them for him and the money just keeps coming in without his having to do anything.

Such is the life of grace. This is what eventually happens in our spiritual life. We learn how to set laws into motion which take care of us and we enjoy the fruits of our labour. The destiny of man is to learn how to enjoy the highest spiritual laws in the universe. It is then that we understand such scriptural quotes as: 'Fear not, little children, it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' 'All I have is thine.' 'All that the Father hath is mine.' This is what Jesus meant when he said: 'I have come that their joy might be made full.' This is what he meant when he said: 'The fields are white already to harvest.' He meant that perfection already exists awaiting our individual harvest. Let us all, then, resolve that we are going to do all we can to eliminate the weeds from our own garden and plant only the seeds of Truth. Knowing that infinite joy awaits us as a result of our labour, let us strive more and more for our spiritual advancement.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Dr. R. Balasubrahmanian, M.A., Ph.D., is the Reader in Philosophy in the Annamalai University. In his learned article, which starts from this month, he has discussed the place of *karma* in the Advaitic scheme of discipline according to Maṇḍana, examining it from various points of view, as found in our philosophical thought. Further instalments of the article will appear in our following issues.

Sri Jotindra Nath Mukherjee, M.A., LL.B., of Purulia in his article 'Sanskrit Drama' traces the historical evolution of dramatics in Indian lore and tells us about the later Sanskrit dramas, some of which are masterpieces that have not only entertained the actors on the stage and the spectators in the auditorium but have also enriched the Sanskrit literature as a whole and have drawn unreserved appreciation from the art connoisseurs of the East and the West alike.

Dr. Nandalal Chatterji, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt. of the University of Lucknow, in his learned article this month, makes an assessment of the contribution of the British rule towards the cultural renaissance of India. The article is both informative and interesting, and draws our attention to the need of evolving 'a synthetic culture' which will be India's 'distinctive contribution to world-thought and world-culture'.

Mr. E. Salès, a French national residing in West Germany, is the editor of a sociological press service, and has published many books on sociology and philosophy. He is deeply interested in Indian religion and philosophy. In his article 'Re-spiritualization', he presents his viewpoint regarding the present mechanical civilization and the way out of its de-humanizing effects. It will be interesting to know how a Westerner looks at the potential possibilities of Indan thought towards removing many of the maladjustments of the present-day life which have resulted from the lack of spiritual insight in us.

Swami Gitananda, of the Ramakrishna Order, writes in this issue about the contribution of Swami Vivekananda to the concept of age-old monasticism of our land. The great ideal of monasticism was forgotton generally and it came to be mistakenly associated with idleness and unwarranted passivity. It was left to Swami Vivekananda to re-orient that institution and make it vigorous and meaningful.

Professor Rabindra Kumar Siddhantashastree, M.A., P.R.S., is the Head of the Department of Sanskrit in the M.B.B. College, Agartala, Tripura. His article 'The Conception of Goddess Durgā through the Ages', which is so informative, will be read with interest, particularly in this month, when She will be worshipped throughout the country.

'Vivekananda and the Indian Renaissance' is the tribute of Dr. Braj Lal Goswami, M.A., Ph.D., of the Government College, Ludhiana, to the memory of Swami Vivekananda in his birth centenary year. In this article, Dr. Goswami has shown how Swami Vivekananda has re-invigorated Indian life and thought of the present times, and how his teachings, if followed earnestly, can help us make for a fuller and richer life, resolving the conflicts and inconsistencies into unity and synthesis.

'The Destiny of Man' is one of the lessons given by Rev. Guy Laberge, Assistant Minister of the Church of Religious Science, Pacific Palisades, California, U.S.A. He says here that man has spent vast energies in the study of human race in a scientific way, but has neglected its spiritual aspect. It is now time that he delved within himself to study his real nature and began to 'live a life of grace'.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF VEDĀNTA PHILOSOPHY. By Swami Pratyagatmananda Sarasvati. *Published by Ganesh & Co., Madras-17. Pages 320. Price Rs. 15.*

Swami Pratyagatmananda's contribution to the resuscitation and revival of the best in the heritage of the Tantra is well known. In fact, it is doubtful if without his guidance and collaboration, Sir John Woodroffe would have been so successful in his celebrated labours in that field. Swamiji, happily still with us, continues to share his profound perceptions in the science of soul-culture, *upāsanā*, through the several writings that flow from his prolific pen. The present work, first published some thirty years ago, deals with another sphere, the subject of Vedānta philosophy, though there, too, he has linked it with the practical side of *yoga* and *sādhanā* with which he has been exclusively preoccupied during these later years.

Here are twelve lectures given at the University of Calcutta in 1927 under a special endowment, presenting the foundations of the Vedānta philosophy and its central features in terms of current scientific and philosophical terms, and appraising its *value* to the modern man. Though the treatment covers the whole of Vedānta in general terms, it deals particularly with what is called Śākta Vedānta which does not deny but gives the fullest value to the terms of life and creation as expressions of a divine dynamism.

Swamiji calls it a 'radical realism' which starts at the level of 'the given or the concrete whole of experience or *fact*'. It is an 'a-logical (undefined and unmeasured) fact to which, as such, the polarity of real and unreal does not apply; which logically appreciated, is the perfect universe of the 'continuum-point or Īśvara; of which the pure ether of Being-Consciousness-Bliss-Power is certainly the substratum; in which a measuring stress is operative constituting a manifold of centres, which represent so many "positions" in an infinite curve of involution-evolution "play".' Further, this 'continuum of Being-Power involves Itself as the point and evolves as centres in various planes and positions to become the continuum again; every centre represents an attitude of Brahman's Will-to-be-and-become, and consequently, it cannot cease to be so long as the "motive" or will at the root of it persists; that is, so long as the end or purpose involved in its being is not realized.'

How is that end to be realized, what are the methods and what the circumstances for its realization, are questions that have been dealt with with convincing argument and illustrative detail in some of these lectures. So, too, the ethical and other implications of Brahman, the Reality—Freedom, Joy, Immortality—come in for reasoned exposition.

The exposition is thorough and brilliant, though one needs to read portions more than once to follow the argument. In the author's hands philosophy melts into poetry, thought acquires beauty and power.

Sri M. P. Pandit

LETTERS FROM SRI RAMANASHRAMAM. By Suri Nagamma. *Published by Sri Ramanashramam, Tiruvannamalai (Madras)*. *Pages 308. Price Rs. 4.*

A gem among the growing number of publications about the life and teaching of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, this collection of letters by a lady-devotee to her brother throws more light on the personality of the sage on its human side than any other book so far released.

Suri Nagamma wrote some three hundred letters during her stay at Ramanashramam, reporting whatever was of interest in the day-to-day life there. They were not written with an eye to publication and are hence free and intensely human. The present collection forms less than half of these valuable letters (originally in Telugu) rendered into English. The subjects covered are varied, and the occasions range from pleasant repartees to serious discussions; but throughout, the benevolent personality of Bhagavan dominates. His reminiscences of his pre-ashram life in the caves, encounters with tigers, and friendly intercessions in the affairs of simian royalty on the hills, his ways of dealing with children and animals, his narrations of the backgrounds of some of his writings in Tamil, Malayalam etc. are recorded in accurate detail. The Maharshi's replies to queries of visitors of all sorts, some serious, some light, are illuminating. Profound truths like grace, *samādhi*, *śakti*, *karma*, *jñāna*, *bhakti*, etc. are treated from so many angles and with such an abundance of illustrations from the scriptures and from personal experience that no spiritual seeker can afford to miss this book, whatever be his path.

Asked, once, if it was wrong for a seeker to be going from place to place, Bhagavan replied that what was important was not to keep the body in one place but to keep the *mind* in one place. Verily, more is to be learnt from the *caryā*, daily life and conduct, of the *jñānin*, than through his *upadeśa*.

Sri M. P. Pandit

NEWS AND REPORTS

PASSING AWAY OF SWAMI SASWATANANDA

We announce with deep sorrow the passing away of Swami Saswatananda, aged 69, at the Belur Math on the 27th August 1963 at 10-02 p.m. For about two years he was suffering from heart trouble. On the 29th July, for the third time within a year, he was hospitalized. His condition gradually deteriorated and at last when the condition became hopeless, to fulfil his wish, he was brought to the Math on Friday, the 23rd August in the afternoon. His condition then deteriorated fast in spite of the best efforts of the doctors who attended on him constantly and the end came on the 27th August. He was fully conscious till the last hours, and could recognize persons and speak also, though indistinctly.

The Swami joined the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Varanasi in 1919. A disciple of Srimat Swami Shivananda Maharaj, he had his *sannyāsa* also from him in 1923. From 1925 to 1928 he was the Warden of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home at Madras. From 1929 to 1936 he was a member of the Working Committee at Belur Math. In 1936 he became the President of Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras. He came back to the Belur Math in 1944, and in 1947 he was made a Trustee and an Assistant Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, which posts he held till his death. He was also the President of the Saradapitha since 1959.

The Swami possessed a loving heart, and was austere in his habits. Many persons, especially young men, who came in touch with him were very much benefited and inspired. While in the South he had won the hearts of many. In his demise the organization has sustained a great loss. May his soul rest in peace!

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVIII NOVEMBER 1963 No. 11

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—:o:—

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Belur Math, April 13, 1935

In the evening many visitors had come for Vijnananandaji's *darśana*. One of them asked him: 'Sir, what is the cause of rebirth ?'

Maharaj: 'It is due to desire. If you can get rid of all your desires, rebirth will not take place. If I push a thing, for instance, it will move so long as it has got that momentum; and if not pushed further, it will then stop. We provide new impetus to our *karmas* in every birth, thus continuing the cycle of rebirths. But if we check it completely, that is if we rise over our desires, we will have no further rebirths.'

The gentleman talked of Kant and Hegel and the operation of cause and effect, to which Maharaj said: 'You see, the whole of a cause does not appear as effect; some part of it remains unexpressed too.'

The gentleman tried to counter it by raising a detailed argument on the subject and quoted the views of Kant and other philosophers, to all of which Maharaj listened with an amused smile and then said gravely: 'You better leave these debates and arguments alone. We have got a brain of very limited capacity; and for realizing God, all this hair-splitting is of no use. What you require is burning faith in Him. In order to be firmly established in that faith, you may raise one or two valid points, but nothing more. Our arguments are just like arm-chair discussions; they lead us nowhere. We argue about God and then go home and lie down in bed. That is not religion, and it does not contribute to peace of mind. I, too, in my younger days read Kant and Hegel and I told Paramahamsa Deva: "You don't know anything, my dear Sir. Have you read these books?" His reply to it was: "What are you saying? Leave your books and treatises aside. They don't provide true knowledge. They are *avidyā* (lower knowledge)."

'That is how I was forced to give up arguing. What is wanted is such faith. But we must have that faith implanted in us if we want to see God, whereas divine incarnations already have it. That is the only difference. They have seen God; we too will certainly see Him, only it is a matter of time.' Then referring to a legend[1] about Nārada and two devotees of God, Maharaj said: 'When the latter devotee was told that he would see God after the lapse of as many years as there were leaves in the tamarind tree under which he was sitting, he started dancing in an exuberance of joy, at which Nārada asked him in amazement: "Why does that give you so much happiness? There are innumerable leaves in that tamarind tree." The devotee said: "But some time I *will* see God and attain salvation. That is great joy indeed!" This is the kind of faith that is needed. Otherwise arguments and discussions only cloud the issue and create confusion. And take even Kant and other philosophers. In the end they say: "One cannot be sure that God exists. But behind this entire world of creation, there is something which guides everything in an orderly fashion." All that means precious little. On the other hand one *can* see God, talk with Him, and touch Him. Do they say such things? If not, what is the use of their philosophy?'

Devotee: 'But you, Sir, stand on a different plane, and we are ordinary beings. Can we achieve spiritual enlightenment at all?'

Maharaj: 'Yes, certainly. There is a story that a very well-read man went to a *sādhu* to be helped in the way of Self-realization. The *sādhu* told him, "First of all you have to unlearn all that you have learnt in books, and then you can come to me." So you see that book-learning is useless for the purpose you have in view. The only thing required is faith.'

Two devotees just then arrived for initiation. They had come from distant Barisal. Maharaj continued: 'See from how far away they have come for getting initiation. If you ask me as to why they should come, what shall I say? They have come evidently because they have got faith in God.' Then he intoned a Bengali verse which means: Faith helps one meet Kṛṣṇa but vain arguments lead one astray.

For some time Maharaj was silent and then said: 'Listen to a funny story. A boat was going along the Ganges, and there was an atheistic Brāhmaṇa in it. He had no belief in any god or goddess. Now a storm arose and the boat was about to sink, when that Brāhmaṇa out of fear suddenly cried out, "O Mother Durgā, save me." One of the men asked: "How is it that *you* are praying to the goddess?" The Brāhmaṇa said, "I know there are no gods or goddesses; but should there be any, it will serve the purpose now." The story evoked much laughter in those present.

On another day a young devotee came to Vijnananandaji and after bowing to him, earnestly said: 'Maharaj, I am working under a businessman, and it is impossible to work there without telling lies. I want your advice about it. Will these little falsehoods stand in the way of my realizing God?' Maharaj said, 'Deviations from truth will surely hamper realization of God. God is truth and to realize Him you have to be completely truthful.'

Hearing this one of the visitors said: 'But in business a little untruthfulness does not matter much.' At this Maharaj said to the devotee: 'What a strange thing to say! You should not listen to what other people say. Your duty is to endeavour to be truthful under all circumstances. But if at times owing to special reasons you have to utter a falsehood, it need not worry you too much, because while you are subordinate to another person, you cannot help obeying him. If you be completely truthful, you will only lose your job. Now go on working as you are doing; afterwards, when you are more free, you can follow your own inclinations and stick to truth at all times. But know it to be the last word that to realize God you have to be wholly truthful in thought, word, and deed.'

Allahabad Math, April 23, 1935

Two monks had come from Varanasi to see

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[1] Refer *Raja yoga* by Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Vijnanananda who was in a very cheerful frame of mind in their company. In course of conversation, the talk turned to the greatness of Swamiji and Rakhal Maharaj, on which Maharaj said: 'As between them one complemented the other. Each was superior in his own sphere. Ordinarily they are not comparable. Swamiji gave the ideas and Rakhal Maharaj translated them into action.

'At times Swamiji used to scold us severely. As I was under the care of Rakhal Maharaj, I did not receive very much of Swamiji's scolding. Once Swamiji said that from one point of view India's decadence was due to her sages. I thought Swamiji was decrying them and objected: "No Sir, you are wrong about these sages." Swamiji's face turned red and he told Rakhal Maharaj who was pacing about there: "See, Rakhal, Peshan says I do not know anything." Rakhal Maharaj comforted him saying: "Why do you take him seriously? He is just a boy and understands very little." Swamiji at once cooled down just like a child.

'Rakhal Maharaj and Baburam Maharaj were the two souls who came in contact most with Swamiji, and so had to bear the brunt of his scolding. One day Swamiji was roundly abusing Rakhal Maharaj who went inside the room and shut the door. On the next morning Swamiji sent for Rakhal Maharaj and as soon as he came in, Swamiji affectionately embraced him and said: "Brother Rakhal, I abused you very badly yesterday. My temper somehow got the better of me." And Rakhal Maharaj immediately said, "What does that matter? You scold us for our own good. That need not upset you at all." And Swamiji was pleased. They went on talking on many subjects after this.

'To those who went to Swamiji for initiation he would say, "You think I possess only a pleasant demeanour; but if even after seeing me in one of my violent moods you feel inclined to get initiated by me, you are welcome." And the boys would reply, "Yes, Maharaj, we can put up with everything."

'Nowadays there is no scolding in the Math. Formerly there was as much scolding as there was much love, too.

'Once (at the Belur Math), while taking a stroll, Swamiji told me: "The Master's temple will be here." He pointed out the exact spot where the construction has now started. Then he asked me: "Shall I live to see it?" I said, "Yes, Maharaj, you will see it all right." He was silent for some time and then said: "Yes, I will see it, but from above." Now that the temple is being built, he is seeing it from above.

'When I was in Belur Math looking after the construction of the masonry steps in front of the Math building leading down to the river, I saw one hot summer day Swamiji on the upper verandah sipping cold drink. I too was feeling thirsty, when one of Swamiji's attendants came with a glass tumbler in his hand saying, "Swamiji has sent this cold drink for you." I felt supremely happy but found only a few drops at the bottom of the tumbler. I felt disappointed and at the same time annoyed to see that Swamiji had thought fit to indulge in a practical joke when I was feeling so terribly thirsty. Anyway, I took those few drops as his *prasāda* and strange to say, immediately my thirst was quenched and I felt relieved. It was an amazing experience. When after finishing the work I was returning to my room, Swamiji asked me if I had taken the cold drink he had sent me. I said, "There were only a few drops but that was enough to quench my thirst." He was very pleased to hear it.

'Swamiji never scolded anyone without reason. He loved us dearly and scolded us for our own good. After his last illness he was slowly convalescing, and on the day he went to see the Uttarpara Library, I left for Allahabad. A few days later I got a telegram conveying the sad news of his passing away. The day before I got it, I saw him while meditating in the shrine room of Brahmavadin Club. I was wondering about it and the telegram explained the mystery. I had a vision of Rakhal Maharaj also before he passed away.'

Patna Ashrama, October, 1935

At the earnest request of a devotee of Patna, Swami Vijnanananda went there in the last week of October, 1935. On the occasion of the Kāli-pūjā at the residence of a devotee, he went there and created an atmosphere of divine joy and exhilaration. It was a memorable Kāli-pūjā for the Patna devotees. After initiating a Brahmacārī, he told him: 'Give me something.' The Brahmacārī placed some flowers in his hand which Maharaj kept in his pocket and said, 'You have paid the Guru's dues.'

On another occasion he said to an initiated disciple: 'You should look upon the Master and the Holy Mother as one and the same. You must remember that without the Master's grace you cannot get the Holy Mother just as without the Holy Mother's grace you cannot get the Master. The Master is like Nārāyaṇa and the Holy Mother is like Lakṣmī. You should pray to the Holy Mother for strength without which nothing can be done. From the Master you should ask only for pure *bhakti*. You should worship Swamiji as the Lord Śiva. Swamiji's mother worshipped Śiva and got Him as her son.'

In the course of a discussion at Patna, Maharaj said one day: 'One night at Dakshineshwar, it being late, I stayed with the Master. He got some food for me from the *nahabat* (music chamber) and himself fixed the mosquito net over my bed. When I lay down he said, "Do you know why I love you boys? You are all my own, and the Divine Mother has told me to love you all." After a long talk I fell asleep and the Master tucked in the loose end of the mosquito net. In the morning he called me, told me to meditate and himself clapping his hands, chanted the name of Hari.

'How he loved us! We cannot love you like that. We became mad for him after seeing him but you are mad for him even without seeing him but simply hearing about him. How lucky you are!' Maharaj's countenance brightened as he said this, and tears of joy trickled down his cheeks.

On the day he was preparing to leave Patna for Allahabad, it started raining heavily and the devotees wanted him to postpone the journey, to which he said: 'That is out of the question. I have promised to go, and so I must stick to my word. Our Master always kept his word. If he said he would go to the latrine, he would make it a point to go, whether he felt the need for it or not. Truth must be strictly adhered to; that is the beginning and the end of religion. You cannot realize God unless you are perfectly and transparently sincere. And that is possible only for three classes of people: children, lunatics, and the liberated souls. Our Master had the sincerity of a child and sometimes he would throw off his clothes and play with small children. He did not, like other people, suffer from a sense of shyness or shame.'

Barisal Ashrama, November-December, 1935

In the newly built shrine room of the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Barisal, a photograph of the Master was to be installed and at the earnest request of the local monks and devotees Swami Vijnanananda went there on the 25th November, 1935, and stayed for nine days. The devotees and the Ashrama *sādhus* who came in contact with him during that time, savoured the charm of his saintly character and as a result a permanent change was wrought in the spiritual life of many of them. His life which was filled with deep spiritual experiences left an indelible impression and gave a lasting stimulus to everyone. Some of the religious discourses given by him on that occasion at different times are given below. In the afternoon of his arrival at Barisal on November 25, many people of the town assembled in order to see him and listen to his religious discourse.

On a table in his room was a large portrait of the Master, and an air of spirituality pervaded the atmosphere. No one felt like breaking the deep stillness in the room. Then at the request of the visitors, Maharaj detailed some of his supernatural experiences. A sublime brightness suffused his countenance; and pointing to the Master's portrait, he said gravely, 'He is hearing everything.' With regard to the Master, Maharaj said: 'I was sitting at the Master's feet one day at Dakshineshwar when a gentleman from Konnagar came to see him. When after sometime he departed, the Master told me: "I can see people's inside as clearly as one sees things in a glass case." I was therefore nervous at the idea that my innermost being was also clearly revealed to him. "What a dangerous man he is!" I thought. Yet he always spoke about the good things of people and never about their evil side.

'When I first heard the Master say "Rāma and Kṛṣṇa of the past have now combined in this body as Ramakrishna", I felt somewhat sceptical. I thought that though he was talking incoherently, on the whole he was a good and simple man. Later, the Master solemnly said one day, "The One that dallied with the milkmaids at Vrindaban is now in this body." Seeing his fervour and the luminous brightness of his countenance, I believed him. He then explained to me what the conquest of lust meant.' Maharaj became somewhat introspective now, and after some time said: 'Perhaps you think I was hypnotized.' He then chuckled and his eyes indicated that there was no truth in such an inference. After a while he said seriously, 'I was a boy when I saw the Master and I could not have his company for long, and so I understood very little of him.'

THE TWO VIEWS

[EDITORIAL]

There is a beautiful story, full of meaning for many of us, in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. It has been freely translated by Aldous Huxley in *The Perennial Philosophy* as follows:

That Self who is free from impurities, from old age and death, from grief and thirst and hunger, whose desire is true and whose desires come true—that Self is to be sought after and enquired about, that Self is to be realized.

The Devas (gods or angels) and the Asuras (demons or titans) both heard of this Truth. They thought: 'Let us seek after and realize this Self, so that we can obtain all worlds and the fulfilment of all desires.'

Thereupon Indra from the Devas and Virocana from the Asuras approached Prajāpati, the famous teacher. They lived with him as pupils for thirty-two years. Then Prajāpati asked them: 'For what reason have you both lived here all this time?'

They replied: 'We have heard that one who realizes the Self obtains all the worlds and all his desires. We have lived here because we want to be taught the Self.'

Prajāpati said to them: 'The person who is seen in the eye—that is the Self. That is immortal, that is fearless and that is Brahman.'

'Sir,' enquired the disciples, 'who is seen reflected in water or in a mirror?'

'He, the Ātman,' was the reply. 'He indeed is seen in all these.' Then Prajāpati added: 'Look at yourselves in the water, and whatever you do not understand, come and tell me.'

Indra and Virocana pored over their reflections in the water, and when they were asked what they had seen of the Self, they replied: 'Sir, we see the Self; we see even the hair and nails.'

Then Prajāpati ordered them to put on their finest clothes and look again at their 'selves' in the water. This they did and when asked again what they had seen, they answered: 'We see the Self, exactly like ourselves, well adorned and in our finest clothes.'

Then said Prajāpati: 'The Self is indeed seen in these. That Self is immortal and fearless, and that is Brahman.' And the pupils went away, pleased at heart.

But looking after them, Prajāpati lamented thus: 'Both of them departed without analysing or discriminating, and without comprehending the true Self. Whoever follows this false doctrine of the Self must perish.'

Satisfied that he had found the Self, Virocana returned to the Asuras and began to teach them that the bodily self alone is to be worshipped, that the body alone is to be served, and that he who worships the ego and serves the body gains both worlds, this and the next. And this in effect is the doctrine of the Asuras.

But Indra, on his way back to the Devas, realized the uselessness of this knowledge. 'As this Self,' he reflected, 'seems to be well adorned when the body is well adorned, well dressed when the body is well dressed, so too will it be blind if the body is blind, lame if the body is lame, deformed if the body is deformed. Nay more, this same Self will die when the body dies. I see no good in such knowledge.' So Indra returned to Prajāpati for further instruction. Prajāpati compelled him to live with him for another span of thirty-two years; after which he began to instruct him, step by step, as it were.

Prajāpati said: 'He who moves about in dreams, enjoying and glorified—he is the Self. That is immortal and fearless, and that is Brahman.'

Pleased at heart, Indra again departed. But before he had rejoined the other angelic beings, he realized the uselessness of that knowledge also. 'True it is,' he thought within himself, 'that this new Self is not blind if the body is blind, not lame, nor hurt, if the body is lame or hurt. But even in dreams the Self is conscious of many sufferings. So I see no good in this teaching.'

Accordingly he went back to Prajāpati for more instruction, and Prajāpati made him live with him for thirty-two years more. At the end of that time Prajāpati taught him thus: 'When a person is asleep, resting in perfect tranquility, dreaming no dreams, then he realizes the Self. That is immortal and fearless, and that is Brahman.'

Satisfied, Indra went away. But even before he had reached home, he felt the uselessness of this knowledge also. 'When one is asleep,' he thought, 'one does not know oneself as "This is I." One is not in fact conscious of any existence. That state is almost annihilation. I see no good in this knowledge either.'

So Indra went back once again to be taught. Prajāpati made him stay with him for five years more. At the end of that time Prajāpati taught him the highest truth of the Self.

'This body,' he said, 'is mortal, for ever in the clutch of death. But within it resides the Self, immortal, and without form. This Self, when associated in consciousness with the body, is subject to pleasure and pain; and so long as this association continues, no man can find freedom from pains and pleasures. But when the association comes to an end, there is an end also of pain and pleasure. Rising above physical consciousness, knowing the Self as distinct from the sense-organs and the mind, knowing Him in his true light, one rejoices and one is free.'

II

The above story illustrates the two principal views of life held by men from very old times. The one is the view that human life is primarily a physical affair controlled by the laws of nature and the end of it lies in living a materially happy life for oneself and provide for such happiness for others of his family or his race. This view says that the physical existence is all what is real and one need not think in a life after death. The other view holds that life has a meaning larger than the satisfaction of its material needs alone. The real joy of life comes when one transcends the thraldom of matter and becomes the Spirit that he really is. All the scriptures of the world hold this view and proclaim that the object of their teachings is to lift man up from his erring human nature to perfect divinity. They refuse to accept the mere materialistic explanation of human existence on earth. The beginning and end of life are not bounded by its material aspects only; it has ethical and spiritual aspects also which in reality are its essence, and the soul does not return to dust with the decay of the body.

The above story also shows another great truth which we are apt to overlook easily. It is this that not only individuals but also societies are saved or destroyed by the extent of their knowledge and following of the ideals and objectives before them, and for this the leaders of the societies are greatly responsible. It is actually the leaders who give direction to the thought and opinion of the common people. The multitude generally look up to their leaders for guidance and they follow them almost blindly. The problems of meeting the necessities of daily life are so engrossing to the common people that they can hardly find it possible to think of other things, nor have they generally either the leisure or the capacity, or even the energy to think about the higher aspects of life. Whatever ideologies are put before them by their self-appointed or even chosen leaders, whom the common mass of men in their helplessness cannot but depend upon, the people only accept at secondhand on trust. They are incapable of prolonged thoughts and sound judgements or even discerning power of calculative decision and whatever, therefore, a clever and self-asserting man places before them, it is accepted generally and thus the society is easily swayed by the ideas of these leaders. The leaders have, therefore, a great responsibility on them and they must be very careful and conscientious about what they say or preach or do. The *Bhagavad-Gītā*, also, says that whatsoever the superior person does, that is followed by others; the standards and norms he establishes, the common men only go by them.

Virocana was the leader of the demons. He was satisfied with the thought that the body was everything and believed that man's sole happiness lay in taking care of it in all possible ways. The only aim of life to him was to provide for the ways and means of the enjoyment of the flesh for as long a time as possible; and for the achievement of this end, one need not bother oneself about the rightness or wrongness of means. End justifies the means, and all that make for the material happiness of man should be regarded as good. Man does not come but once, hence the opportunity provided should be made full use of in enjoyment of all sorts of pleasure by satisfying the thirst and hunger of the senses. This ideology of Virocana, the leader of the demons, has been accepted as the philosophy of life by his followers and represents a school of thought. Hence we have the conception of the *asuras* and the *āsuric* code of life, so graphically described in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* as *āsuric sampattis or* demonical attributes of life. According to this code, the whole world may be looked upon like a forest in which survival and success come only to those who can use their teeth and claws well and resort to the use of violence in all its myriad forms. The scriptures of the world are filled with the exploits of the followers of Virocana and of the havoc they sought to bring upon the peace and prosperity of the society as a whole. Even amongst us today, we have men subscribing to this view in more or less degrees.

On the other side, there is Indra, the leader of the gods, to whom the insistence of material values alone does not seem sufficient. He finds that such a partial view is incapable of giving real meaning to life and its goal. To him life extends beyond the existence of physical forms and he, in his arduous search for Truth, finds out that real life rests in Spirit and that such a life can be sustained only by a process of penance and sacrifice of material enjoyments. He seems to have found out the clue to true happiness and believed in the dictum of the seers which says: 'The infinite is happiness. There is no happiness in what is finite.' The followers of Indra, the gods, took this philosophy as the basis of life and the *Gītā* beautifully extols this as the *daivī* or godly attributes of life and assures that life has its meaning only in the pursuit of these *daivī sampattis* or godly qualities. This is verily the spiritual way of life and also the way to real joy and peace.

III

This way of spiritual life, however, entails suffering, but, at the same time, it is this way only which contributes to the gradual unfoldment of the Spirit in us and thus ensures true happiness. In every man lie dormant the immense potentialities of the soul, which naturally seek their manifestation in a higher sort of life. *Sādhana* (and it may have various forms) is the conscious way by which we help this process of manifestation become easier and quicker. To gain spirituality is nothing like acquiring something from outside of us. It is a process of unfoldment which comes from within. 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest that divinity within,' says Swami Vivekananda. This unfoldment goes on in every individual in different ways through various stages and circumstances in accordance with the effort we put in for it. The *Bhagavad-Gītā*, therefore, tells us in unambiguous terms that it is we who are the makers or destroyers of our destinies. 'A man should uplift himself by his own self. For this self is the friend of oneself, and this self is the enemy of oneself. The self is the friend of the self for him who has conquered himself by the self. But to the unconquered self, this self is inimical and behaves like a foe.' It teaches us to engage ourselves wisely in the struggle. Our sufferings are mostly due to the fact that we often confuse happiness with pleasure. Pleasure owes its origin to matter, whereas happiness is connected to the Spirit. The pain and sorrow that we suffer from our blind pursuit after pleasure have a baneful effect on us and it gradually drags us down to a lower state when we find nothing but weakness, degradation, and despair in the end. But sufferings, on the other hand, for the Spirit help us manifest the potentialities of the soul and leave us stronger. They kindle the inner fire that burns out the dross and dirt of our life. All men of wisdom have had to pass through this ordeal of suffering and all who pursue this way have also to do the same. There is no short cut to it and this process is termed as *tapasyā* or austerity—the austerity of body, the austerity of mind, and the austerity of speech. It is enjoined in the scriptures that to gain real happiness, it is necessary that one should pass through these austerities with a steadfast determination, unflinching faith, never failing patience and all through with an equanimity of mind, where pain and pleasure, gain and loss, victory and defeat cannot disturb the struggling aspirant. All these notions connected with duality are impermanent in nature and only baffle a weak mind. The Bible also tells us: 'Accept whatever is brought upon thee and be long suffering when thou passest into humiliation. For gold is tried in fire, and acceptable men in the fire of affliction.'

IV

But there are many dangers and pitfalls in this way of struggle and one has to be careful about these. A very common mistake that we commit is that we very often forget that going the way of Spirit does not mean shrinking from our duties and responsibilities till we really have them for us. A beautiful *śloka* of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* says: 'He, who having turned his face from his duties and obligations, merely utters the name of Kṛṣṇa mechanically, not only deceives the world, but deceives himself also and brings dishonour to the god whose devotee he pretends to be.' To become religious is definitely not escaping the struggle of life, which the performance of duties and fulfilment of responsibilities entail. Those who flee from their duties and take to unwarranted short cuts in their haste to reach the goal, often find themselves in difficulties at last.

The world is a sort of moral gymnasium where we have to take exercise and become strong for spiritual pursuits by performing our duties honestly. This is a great lesson that we should learn from all great men, whom we honour and worship for their spirituality even, let alone the successful people in the other fields. Śrī Kṛṣṇa teaches us that a man devoted to his duties easily attains the perfection necessary for a spiritual life. 'From whom is the evolution of all beings, by whom all this is pervaded, worshipping Him with his own duty a man attains perfection.' So, a man can advance from any position, doing his duties honestly and looking forward for a way out of them gradually when he would be perfect and fit to devote himself completely to God. 'By doing well the duty which is nearest to us, the duty which is in our hands now', says Swami Vivekananda, 'we make ourselves stronger; and improving our strength in this manner step by step, we may even reach a state in which it shall be our privilege to do the most coveted and honoured duties in life and in society.' He further says: 'Every duty is holy, and devotion to duty is the highest form of the worship of God.' This is one great lesson we must never forget while we are on our way through life to higher reaches.

But performance of duty is not so easy. Duty often becomes bondage with us if done without proper outlook. 'Duty becomes a disease with us;' says Swami Vivekananda cautioning us, 'it drags us ever forward. It catches hold of us and makes our whole life miserable. It is the bane of human life. This duty, this idea of duty is the midday summer sun which scorches the innermost soul of mankind. Look at those poor slaves to duty! Duty leaves them no time to say prayers, no time to bathe. Duty is ever on them. They go out and work. Duty is on them! They come home and think of the work for the next day. Duty is on them! It is living a slave's life, at last dropping down in the street and dying in harness, like a horse. This is duty as it is.' But how can such a dreadful thing be made sweeter and more agreeable? Is there no way then to make the performance of duties easier, since we should neither escape nor can avoid the performance of duties? In answer to this anxious question of ours, the Swami says, 'Duty is seldom sweet. It is only when love greases its wheels that it runs smoothly; it is a continuous friction otherwise. How else could parents do their duties to their children, husbands to their wives and *vice versa*? Do we not meet with cases of friction every day in our lives? Duty is sweet only through love.' And to see that duty does not bind us further we have 'to be unattached and to work as free beings, to give up all work unto God.' This is the secret of work, the right key to open the doors to that 'blessedness, eternal peace arising from perfect freedom' which 'is the highest concept of religion.'

THE INDIAN IMAGE OF THE IDEAL GURU

(A REFLECTION OF SWAMIJI'S PERSONALITY)

By Professor P. S. Naidu

Down the ages, in the annals of human history, the Guru has been held in great respect. In some cultures, the Guru has been almost deified, and we in India, have unhesitatingly identified him with Divinity. Deep compassion, abounding grace for the repentant, and readiness to take on the sufferings of devotees or disciples, are characteristics which the Guru has, and which are also found in the great *avatāras*. But, times have changed. Not that the passage of time makes any difference to the eternal and absolute values: it does make a difference to the human approach and the human attitude to these values. And Kaliyuga has created an upheaval in many settled convictions in the human mind. The transcendental and the mystical had to give place to the rational. There was a general lowering of value-criteria from the spiritual to the psychological level. And this had its repercussions in the attitude to the teacher. The Guru was no longer looked upon as one who helped you to realize the divinity latent in you, but as one who instructed you in skills, mental and manual. He was no longer an educator in the true sense, but an instructor. It will not be out of place to point out here that the steady impoverishment of the image of the Guru in the Indian mind was, to a large extent, hastened by the influence of foreign cultures, Semitic as well as Teutonic. The net result was that in the nineteenth century the teacher in our country was looked down upon as an artisan, or at best as a technician, and a wage earner.

The unfortunate tendency outlined above is perhaps best illustrated in the analytic approach which modern psychology makes to the study of teaching as a profession. In spite of the holistic or *grstalt*-approach to personality, advocated by the youngest of the psychological schools (which happens to be German-Jewish in origin), the dominant tendency is to analyse, and break up the personality of the teacher into component traits. Extensive 'objective' studies of the qualities of a successful teacher have been made, and batteries of teaching-aptitude tests have been constructed. A few examples may be cited here, to indicate how far these well-intentioned investigators have departed from the true image of the teacher. One of the early studies mentioned the following as the qualities which one who seeks to enter the teaching profession should have, if one expects success: 1. Address (alertness, dexterity, skill, etc.), 2. Personal Appearance, 3. Optimism, 4. Reserve, 5. Enthusiasm, 6. Fairness, 7. Sincerity, 8. Sympathy, 9. Vivacity, and 10. Scholarship. This list was based on the opinion of administrators and principals, and was considered not up to the mark. The teachers themselves were invited to draw up a separate list of, what they considered to be, the traits leading to success in their profession. They chose to construct a rating scale under the following heads of 'Efficiency': physical, moral, administrative, dynamic, achieved, projected, supervisory, and social. Similar studies made recently in our country brought more or less similar results, but with one significant difference. Great stress was laid on the moral qualities of the teacher, and on the level of his spiritual aspirations and attainment. These analytic studies are going ahead with great enthusiasm, and seriousness of purpose. They have a limited value, and it is not our intention to discourage them. They are valid within limits, but they are not adequate. They take us nowhere near the true image of the ideal teacher. A teacher is not assembled out of given psychological traits and pedagogical qualities. He is an individual, a living, growing, dynamic *person*, steadily developing the latent divine spark in him. The totality (or *gestalten*) of his personality and individuality should not be lost sight of when we are trying to understand him as a teacher.

The naturalists and psychologists, in our country and abroad, have lost sight of the teacher as a person. The philosophical idealists have not. They have with keen insight made statements about the teacher, and it is in these statements that we have to look for the image we are seeking. Creative thinkers in the field of philosophy of education have been particularly interested in studying the personality of the teacher. It is interesting to note that, depending on their general philosophical outlook, they have given us different images of the teacher, from widely differing perspectives. Naturalistic philosophy of education pushes the teacher to the background, and ignores his personality. Realism is slightly better. The teacher is given a place in the realistic scheme of things, but the realist is so uncertain about his view of the dynamics of human personality, and so vacillating is he between determinism and freedom that no clear image of the teacher emerges out of his philosophy of education. If from realism we turn to pragmatism, we find that we are gradually emerging out of the woods. The teacher is viewed benevolently in the role of the parent in the family. He is to give guidance and sometimes exercise authority, but he must always respect the freedom of the learner. He has to plan for learning activities for socializing the child. And that is the best image that pragmatism can present of the teacher.

When all is said and done, realism, naturalism, and pragmatism give us either a pale and lifeless picture of the teacher or no picture at all. It is only when we turn to idealism we feel thrilled and inspired. The idealist has a very clear conception of the personality of the teacher, because he is clear about the ultimate aims of education, and of the means to be used for realizing those aims. The teacher occupies a central place in the idealistic scheme of education. 'The teacher is more the key to the educative process than any other element comprising it.' It is only in a philosophical system, which views the teacher from this exalted perspective, we can expect to find a correct image of his personality. Nor are we disappointed in our expectations.

The idealistic image of the teacher begins with the inspiring statement: 'The teacher is a co-worker with God in perfecting human nature.' Can the human mind conceive of any more exalted ideal for the noblest of professions? The teacher is the privileged servant of God. He is called upon to discharge the sacred duty of helping and perfecting child nature. And it is for him to measure up to the demands made on him by divine will.

To be a co-worker with the divine Father, the teacher has to possess certain unique qualities. These are, according to Western idealists, the capacity to present to the child a model or image of reality in his own person. For the child, the teacher is, in a very real sense, the personification of all that is best in the world it lives in. Yet, in spite of this dominating position he occupies in the child's little world, the teacher should as often as possible, withdraw to the background, allowing full freedom for the child to develop its inner self.

To discharge this double function of leading the child by the hand, and allowing it to walk ahead unassisted, the teacher has to be a master of child psychology. He should possess complete knowledge of the stages of child development. With this knowledge as background, the teacher should be an accomplished master of the art of communication. Not only should he be an accomplished scholar in his own field, he should also have the skill to communicate the knowledge he possesses to the child, at the level where the latter stands.

It is not enough for the teacher to have the skill to put over, *at the cognitive level*, the knowledge that he has, but he has to influence the child *at the conative level, too*; in fact, he has to shape *the total personality* of the child. The teacher has to function as a friend, philosopher, and guide. This function he can discharge by leading an exemplary life himself, by continuing to learn throughout his life in a spirit of humility, and by having an abiding faith in what he teaches and in the missionary character of his profession.

And, at a lower level, the teacher should have the capacity to communicate to the child the skills he possesses. He should also be a master craftsman in his profession.

In short, he should have infinite faith in his profession, in his subject, and in the child he has to teach.

This idealistic profile of the teacher's personality is very impressive indeed. But it lacks proper spiritual orientation. It has to be translated in the language of Vedāntic idealism. And it is here that the personality of Swami Vivekananda comes in. In Swamiji we find the perfect embodiment of the Indian image of the Guru. I should put it this way: The Indian conception of the ideal Guru is only a generalization based on the Vedāntic traits in Swamiji's towering personality. That he swayed vast audiences by his teachings, that he was able to convey difficult Vedāntic ideas and ideals to the minds of Western scholars, and that he was able to mould and transform the nature of those whom he taught, are well known facts. Now, let us see what it is in him that made Swamiji an ideal Guru.

From the Vedāntic standpoint the Guru should have attained the goal to which he wants to lead his pupils. The Western idealist will say, the teacher should be a master of his subject. The Vedāntin says he should be a master of that *one subject* or *supreme subject*, namely Self-realization. He should have realized the highest truth. He should have attained Parabrahman.

He alone knows the path who has reached the goal. The pitfalls on the way, the hurdles, the steep inclines, the deep depressions, and the hidden traps are all known to that person alone who has reached the destination. And knowing them, he can act as a competent guide to others following the path. The true teacher is one who knows the difficulties on the path to realization, and can guide his pupils with success.

Swamiji, under the inspiring guidance of the Great Master Sri Ramakrishna, reached the goal, and knew every inch of the path. So much so, later, after the *mahāsamādhi* of Sri Sri Guru Maharaj, when he had to take charge of the first group of the devoted disciples, he knew what path was suited to each one of them and at what pace each should be taken along.

In a true enough sense Swamiji was a co-worker with Paramahamsa Deva, the *avatāra* of this century, in perfecting human nature. He was a true personification of Reality for his *gurubhāis*, and today he continues to be the same to us, if we care to (or if we have the courage to) follow his steps. And he was a master of the psychology of the learner—the psychology which reveals one's past *saṁskāras*, one's burden of accumulated propensities of all the past births, and tells the Guru where the disciple stands. Knowing the exact level reached by the total personality, comprising body, mind, and soul of the disciple, the Guru can give the push in the right direction, and with the right momentum, so that the pupil makes steady progress towards the goal. This is the kind of psychology that Indian idealism recommends to the teacher, and this is the psychology in which Swamiji was an accomplished master.

That the teacher has to pay individual attention to the learner, and give him individual guidance goes without saying. Psychology, which in recent times devoted much of its attention to the study of individual differences, strongly supports the pedagogical principle of individual instruction. But sheer psychology does not go deep enough. It is idealistic philosophy, and Indian idealistic philosophy in particular, that penetrates to the very core of individuality. Swamiji has taught us the true meaning of individuality. This individuality has to be interpreted at the spiritual level, or in terms of the level of attainment of the individual soul: as many individuals, so many paths. The Guru has to know the exact level that his disciple has already reached, and in terms of this level of attainment, he has to give him individual guidance for his final liberation.

In giving individual guidance the Guru has to remove the obstacles that obstruct his pupil's progress. He has to dissolve the crust which surrounds his true personality and dims its lustre. Sometimes the Guru may have to rescue his disciple through vicarious suffering. The blazing fire of the Guru's spiritual personality has to consume the sins of his disciple.

The Guru, in our view, is the very personification of compassion and mercy and of grace. Swamiji's entire life on earth was suffused with this infinite tenderness and love for the poor, the downtrodden, and the suffering. And it is he who has taught us to see the divine in the outcaste, the pariah, and the enslaved. It is from him we learn the lesson that all service is to be rendered in the spirit of worship of the divine in the person served. If you are nursing an invalid, consider yourself as the devotee worshipping at the altar of your *iṣṭa-devatā*—the altar being the body of the invalid, and the *iṣṭa-devatā* as incarnated in him. If you are donating money to build a hospital or a school or a bridge, consider yourself lucky in that you are permitted to make an offering at the altar of divinity, and, if as a teacher you are engaged in shaping young minds, consider yourself as a specially privileged person entrusted with the task of blowing into a blazing fire the smouldering spark of divinity in each child entrusted to you. This is the spirit in which the teacher has to view the sacred duties of his profession.

And this leads us to the last and the most important view of the image of the teacher we are trying to build up. The teacher's life has to be spotlessly pure. *There is no question of a private life apart from a public life for the teacher*. For him all his life is public, open to the gaze of his pupils. In other professions, one may do what one pleases with one's leisure, and with one's private life; not so in the teaching profession. The teacher's private life, and his life during leisure time have to be pure, and as transparent as crystal glass.

Such is the image of the teacher that we get by a reverential study of Swamiji's life and such are the demands that Indian Vedāntic idealism makes of the teacher. The question may then be asked: How many of us, the present generation of teachers, are fit to be called teachers? It is true that the image presented in this article is the very ideal of perfection, and few can measure up to it. But, I may take the liberty of toning down the demands by saying that every teacher should (1) unhesitatingly and unreservedly accept the ideal as his own ideal, and (2) take every step within his reach to attain this ideal. Surely a teacher can and should accept these two conditions, or quit the teaching profession.

THE PLACE OF KARMA IN THE ADVAITIC SCHEME OF DISCIPLINE

By Dr. R. Balasubrahmanian

(Continued from the previous issue)

III

KNOWLEDGE IS SUBSIDIARY TO KARMA

In the two views which we examined and rejected above, *karma* and knowledge were treated as the subsidiary and the principal respectively with a view to show that *karma* is the direct means to Self-knowledge. There are those who reverse this relation and argue that the knowledge of the Self stands in a subordinate relation to *karma*. They argue that only a person who knows that his Self is different from the body, and that it outlives the body to enjoy the fruits of *karma* like heaven, which manifest themselves after the death of this body, will perform the Vedic *karmas*. By getting this knowledge, the agent becomes qualified for actions. The qualification which the agent thus acquires is analogous to that which the rice-grains acquire by being sprinkled with water. Just as the rice-grains become fit to be used in the sacrifice due to the purification (*saṁskāra*) which sprinkling causes in them, so also the agent becomes qualified for actions through the knowledge which he acquires. In short, the knowledge of the Self, according to this view, stands in a subordinate relation to *karma* by becoming a purificatory subsidiary to the agent.[20]

Maṇḍana brings out the untenability of this view by pointing out that there is no evidence like context (*prakaraṇa*), etc. to show the subsidiary relation of knowledge to *karma*.[21] In the case of sprinkling the rice-grains, its relation to *karma* is known through context (*prakaraṇa*). No purpose is going to be served by sprinkling the rice-grains which are not used in *karma*. But when the rice-grains which are used in *karma* are sprinkled, there arises an unseen potency which is related to the supreme unseen potency of the *karma* under reference. So we are able to know through the context that the sprinkling of rice-grains is related to the sacrifice under reference. But no such evidence is available to show the subsidiariness of knowledge to *karma*. The section which deals with the knowledge of the Self falls outside the ritualistic portion of the Veda, and so it is impossible to establish the subsidiariness of knowledge to *karma* through context.

Nor is it possible to establish the relation through syntactical connection (*vākya*). There is, for example, the passage: 'He whose sacrificial laddle is made of *parṇa*-wood. . . .'[22] The laddle (*juhū*) which is referred to in this passage is a special implement which is used in ritual only. Through syntactical connection implied in the passage 'He whose sacrificial laddle is made of *parṇa*-wood' it is known that 'being-made-of-*parṇa*-wood' is subsidiary to the laddle. Since the laddle is invariably related to the rite, 'being-made-of-*parṇa*-wood' also comes to be related to the rite. Thus it is established that 'being-made-of-*parṇa*-wood' is subsidiary to the rite through the sacrificial laddle. But no such relation between knowledge and *karma* can be shown through syntactical connection. The self which is the agent cannot be used as a mediating link to establish the relation between knowledge and *karma*. Unlike the laddle which being indispensable for the rite is invariably related to it, the agent is not invariably related to Scripture-ordained *karmas* alone: the agent performs the secular acts in the same way as he does the Vedic *karmas*. Thus it is clear that we cannot establish the subsidiariness of knowledge to *karma* through syntactical connection.[23]

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[20] *BS*, Part I, p. 28.

[21] The evidences indicative of the subsidiary relation are six: direct assertion (*śruti*), indication (*liṅga*), syntactical connection (*vākya*), context (*prakaraṇa*), position (*sthāna*), and designation (*samākhyā*). *Vide Mīmāṁsā-paribhāṣā*, p. 23.

[22] *Taittirīya-saṁhitā*, 3-5-7-1.

Since there is no evidence like context (*prakaraṇa*), syntactical connection (*vākya*), etc. to show that knowledge is subsidiary to *karma*, it must be admitted, argues Maṇḍana, that the knowledge of the Self has an independent fruit of its own, and that statements like 'He does not return hither again',[24] which declare the fruit that will accrue to one who has attained Self-knowledge, should not be brushed aside as *arthavādas*. The contention that the pursuit of the Vedic *karmas* is the perceptible result (*dṛṣṭa-phala*) of the knowledge of the Self is absurd. It is true that a person will not perform the Vedic *karmas*, whose fruits manifest themselves only after death, if he does not know that the Self is the agent, and that being eternal it outlives the body to enjoy the fruits. But the knowledge of the Self which we get from the Upaniṣads is not conducive to the pursuit of the Vedic *karmas*; on the contrary, it is positively prejudicial to it. The Upaniṣads declare that the Self is neither the agent nor the enjoyer. There is, for example, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text which reads: 'The Self eats nothing.'[25] In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* we come across the passage: 'The other looks on without eating.'[26] We are told in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* that the Self is 'without parts, without activity'.[27] While the first of these passages purports to show that the Self is not the experiencer, the last one denies the agency of the Self. The knowledge of the Self which we get from the Upaniṣads is of no use at all for *karma*. And so it is not possible to prove the subsidiariness of Self-knowledge to *karma* on the score that the knowledge of the Self is necessary for one to perform the Vedic *karmas* whose fruits manifest only after death. It is utterly meaningless to cite the Upaniṣadic texts like 'what, indeed, one performs with knowledge, faith and meditation, that indeed becomes more powerful',[28] 'He, O Gārgī, who in this world, without knowing this Immutable, offers oblations in the fire . . . finds all such acts but perishable',[29] 'Both his knowledge and work take hold of him',[30] etc. on the assumption that they lend support to the subsidiariness of knowledge to *karma*. The first of these passages does not refer to the knowledge of the Self or Brahman (*brahma-vidyā*) but to the knowledge of the *udgītha* (*udgītha-vidyā*). This will be evident from the opening passage of the section: 'One should meditate on Om, the *udgītha*.'[31] The second passage does not reveal that the knowledge of the Self is subsidiary to *karma*; on the other hand, it praises the knowledge of the Immutable through decrying *karmas* which yield only perishable results. The last one does not show that knowledge and work begin together to manifest their results, but it shows the division (*vibhāga*) of knowledge and *karma*. It only means that knowledge takes hold of one man and *karma* another, since there is no combination of the two.[32]

IV

ELIGIBILITY FOR KNOWLEDGE THROUGH KARMA

Some others explain the relation between *karma* and knowledge differently. They maintain that one becomes eligible for Self-knowledge only by discharging the three congenital debts (*ṛṇa-traya*) for which the performance of *karmas* is indispensable. They cite the authority of Manu in support of their contention. Manu says: 'Having discharged the three obligations, one is to set one's mind on release.'[33] The debt that one owes to the sages should be paid off by the study of the Veda and the observance of celibacy (*brahmacarya*), the debt to the gods by sacrifices like *agnihotra* and the debt to the ancestors by means of progeny. So the performance of *karma* is necessary to discharge the three congenital debts, whose liquidation is an indispensable qualification for attaining the knowledge of the Self.[34]

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[23] *BS*, Part I, p. 31.

[24] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 8-15-1.

[25] 3-8-8.

[26] 3-1-1.

[27] 6-19.

[28] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 1-1-10.

[29] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 3-8-10.

[30] *Ibid.*, 4-4-2.

[31] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 1-1-1.

[32] *BS*, Part I, pp. 31-32.

[33] Manu, 6-35.

This view is not acceptable to Maṇḍana. If every one should discharge the three congenital debts in order to acquire the necessary qualification for getting the knowledge of the Self, Scripture should have enjoined only one order of life, viz. that of the householder. On the contrary, it refers to the different orders of life and one is permitted to adopt that order of life which one desires. The *Jābāla Upaniṣad*, for example, says: 'Otherwise (if a suitable occasion arises) let one renounce from the life of studentship.'[35] It is clear from this that it is not necessary for every one to be a householder; and if one is not a householder, one cannot liquidate the debts one owes to the gods and the ancestors. The ancient sages, it is said, did not desire children thinking, 'what shall we achieve through children?'[36] In this manner the ancient sages abandoned the desire for offspring, *karma*, etc. A householder who aims at Self-knowledge without performing the duties that belong to his station cannot attain it, because the sin that results on account of his not doing what is enjoined by Scripture becomes a hindrance to the acquisition of knowledge.[37] This is the real significance of Manu's declaration: 'Having discharged the three obligations, one is to set one's mind on release'.

V

NO RELATION BETWEEN KARMA AND KNOWLEDGE WHICH ARE FUNDAMENTALLY OPPOSED TO EACH OTHER

There are those who argue that there is no relation whatsoever between *karma* and knowledge as the two are fundamentally opposed to each other. *Karma* involves duality in the form of means and end, doer and deed, while knowledge reveals the Self which is one and non-dual. It is therefore impossible, according to them, to think of any relation between *karma* and knowledge. If it can be shown that *karma* is a means to knowledge or that knowledge requires the assistance of *karma* in the discharge of its work, it is but proper to say that there is relation between them. The protagonists of this view vehemently repudiate the various possibilities that could be thought of to show the usefulness of *karma* to knowledge. Any attempt undertaken for this purpose is bound to be, according to them, a futile adventure.

There is absolutely no need of *karma* in the matter of Brahman or the Self. It is not something to be accomplished or brought into being through *karma*, for it is ever-existent. *Karma* can never be a means to what is eternal. Nor is it required for the origination of the knowledge of the Self. Knowledge is always obtained through a *pramāṇa*; and since *karma* is not a source of knowledge, there is no need of it for the purpose of getting the knowledge of the Self.

Even though it does not originate knowledge, can it not serve, it may be asked, as an auxiliary to knowledge by helping it in its work? If there is anything to be produced by knowledge, such a question will be significant. There is, however, nothing to be done by knowledge which, by its very nature and unaided, reveals the object. Neither release (*mokṣa*) nor the removal of *avidyā* (*avidyānivṛtti*) nor the destruction of *karmas* (*karmakṣaya*) can be said to be accomplished or produced by knowledge. Release is not something to be brought into being through knowledge. Since release consists in realizing the nature of the Self which is eternal, the question of cause-effect relation between knowledge and release does not arise. If release were something to be brought into being through knowledge, it would cease to be eternal. Removal of *avidyā* also is not something to be done by knowledge after it has come into existence, in whatever way *avidyā* is considered. There are two kinds of *avidyā*: non-apprehension (*agrahaṇa*) and mis-apprehension (*viparyaya-grahaṇa*). Non-apprehension is the *prāga-bhāva* of apprehension or knowledge; and so at the rise of knowledge, it ceases to be. Since the rise of knowledge marks the disappearance of non-apprehension, the question of its removal by knowledge after coming into existence does not arise. The same thing holds good with regard to mis-apprehension, though it is positive (*bhāva-rūpa*). A person mistakes nacre for silver. But when he knows the truth subsequently, his erroneous knowledge disappears. It is wrong to think that it persists for a little while even after the rise of knowledge, and that it is removed by knowledge only subsequently. Mis-apprehension or erroneous knowledge disappears as soon as the right knowledge which is opposed to it comes into being. Since the rise of the right knowledge itself is the removal of mis-apprehension, it is wrong to say that knowledge brings about the destruction of mis-apprehension, by placing them in the cause-effect relation. Just as the removal of *avidyā* (*avidyā-nivṛtti*) is not the effect caused by knowledge, so also the destruction of *karma* which binds the individual is not the effect produced by knowledge. *Karmas* are the product of *avidyā*. They persist so long as *avidyā* continues. When *avidyā* which is their root cause disappears at the rise of knowledge they, too, follow suit. Only if they could continue even after the disappearance of *avidyā*, the question of their destruction by knowledge with the assistance of obligatory and occasional rites (*nitya-naimittika-karmas*) will arise. Scripture itself refers to the destruction of *karmas* when their root cause, viz. *avidyā* disappears at the rise of knowledge. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, for instance, says: 'The knot of the heart is cut, all doubts are dispelled and his *karmas* terminate when He is seen—the higher and the lower.'[38]

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[34] *BS*, Part I, p. 27.

[35] 4.

[36] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 4-4-22.

[37] *BS*, Part I, p. 36.

It is not to the purpose to allege, argue the advocates of this view, that Brahman which is non-dual, which is bereft of relation, cannot be made known by the verbal cognition (*śabda-jñāna*) which has a relational content (*saṃsṛṣṭa-viṣaya*), and that to get the direct intuition (*pratyakṣa* or *aparokṣa-jñāna*), by which alone Brahman is to be realized, *karmas*, meditation, etc. are required. When we are able to get the knowledge of the non-dual, non-relational Brahman from the Upaniṣadic texts like 'The Self is not this, not this,'[39] 'One only without a second,'[40] where is the need for the alleged intuitive cognition? If we require some cognition, it should be for the purpose of knowing something. Since the non-dual Brahman is made known by the verbal testimony itself, there is certainly no need for the cognition through intuition. What is known once through some *pramāṇa* does not require to be known again through some other source. What the other *pramāṇa* is expected to do has already been done by the verbal testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*). The Upaniṣadic texts not merely intimate the Self or Brahman as the existent something, but they intimate it as the highest good, for they proclaim in unmistakable terms that the Self is the supreme bliss, and that it is free from evil, old age, death, and grief. Thus since we get the knowledge of the non-dual Brahman from *śabda* itself, a knowledge which is clear, definite, and free from doubt, there is nothing which is required. When the realization of Brahman or the Self does arise through the knowledge conveyed by *śabda*, there is no transmigratoriness (*saṁsāritvam*) as before; the body and the senses are no more the limiting factors and the binding forces; there is no further deception by the phantasmagoric appearances of the phenomenal world. The reason for this is obvious. Due to ignorance of the real nature of the Self, a person develops the wrong notion (*abhimāna*) that his body is the Self, and all the attributes of transmigratoriness come to be superimposed upon the Self. When the real nature of the Self is realized through the knowledge conveyed by *śabda*, the false knowledge of the Self disappears and the attributes of transmigratoriness could no more be associated with the Self. Scripture says: 'He, verily, who knows the supreme Brahman, becomes Brahman himself;'[41] and so a person who realizes the Self or Brahman which is free from evil, old age, death, etc. gets himself lifted from the destructive whirlpool of *samsāra*. So long as a person identifies his Self with the body, he is subject to the misery caused by the limiting adjunct, viz. body. In the absence of the knowledge that his Self is the ultimate reality and that it is non-dual, he thinks that there are objects other than the Self, which he should strive for and that there are persons for whom he should suffer in the body. He struggles desiring something for himself, something else for his son, etc. and gets involved in the cycle of births and deaths. But all this is impossible for the man who sees everything as the Self. Scripture testifies to this when it says: 'If a man knows the Self as "I am this", then desiring what and for whose sake will he suffer in the body?'[42] Since embodiment or the association with body is the result of false knowledge, it gets removed when the false knowledge disappears at the rise of right knowledge; and so a person who has realized the Self is non-embodied or bodiless even while alive. That is why the Upaniṣad says: 'Him, verily, who is non-embodied, pleasure and pain do not touch.'[43] In short, there is no transmigratoriness as before in the case of him who has realized Brahman as the Self; he, however, who has transmigratoriness as before, has not realized Brahman as the Self. Hence the advocates of this view maintain that, since the realization of the Self takes place through the knowledge conveyed by the Upaniṣadic texts, the utility of *karma*, meditation, etc. is ruled out.[44]

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[38] 2-2-8.

[39] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 3-9-26.

[40] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 6-2-1.

To sum up: there are two points which clearly emerge from the view stated above. They are: (i) *karma* and knowledge are diametrically opposed to each other, and so there can be no relation between them; and (ii) the Upaniṣadic texts which reveal the nature of the non-dual Self directly lead to the realization of the Self, which is release, with the result that there is no need for *karma* and meditation for bringing about the final manifestation of the real nature of the Self.

(To be continued)

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[41] *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, 3-2-9.
[42] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 4-4-12.
[43] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 8-12-1.
[44] *BS*, Part I, pp. 32-34.

HASIDISM: A JEWISH UNIVERSALISM

BY MR. ASHER BLOCK

A superficial glance at Hasidic life today might lead one to believe that the Hasidim are an eccentric sect of Jews who, among other things, wear beards and earlocks, dress in a peculiar garb, dance and sing, and follow their Rebbe-leader with blind and credulous faith. To a large extent such a pre-judgment might very well prove to be true as far as many individual Hasidim are concerned. But would not a similar surface-view and conclusion apply to almost any group of active religionists one could think of?

Our purpose here is to attempt to extract from the entire Hasidic movement its deeper function and meaning; to attempt to distil from the many commonplace and esoteric currents that compose it, some simple universal truths. Indeed, as we shall see, Hasidism itself was an earnest effort, within Jewish life, to extract the essence out of Judaism. Judaism, like every other religion, has in it various elements: theology, ritual, ethics, customs, legends, institutions, and movements. Some of these are naturally more important than others. Those who take their religion in right earnestness, question what is essential and what is not in the many religious forms that have come down to them.

Ever since the beginning of Judaism in the days of Abraham, a process of accretion and selection has been going on. The Five Books of Moses, according to Orthodox tradition, contain 613 *mitzvot* or precepts—all, theoretically, of equal importance. Yet, within the *Tradition* itself, innumerable distinctions and classifications are made. Moses at Mount Sinai announced but Ten Basic Principles, and no more. The prophet Micah stressed only three: to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. And certain rabbis of the Talmud even ventured to compress all the commandments into one. The great Hillel, a Palestinian sage who lived just before the beginning of the Christian era, declared: 'That which is hurtful to thee, do not to thy neighbour. This is the whole doctrine. The rest is commentary.' Rabbi Nachman, a Babylonian scholar of the fourth century, urged that the spirit of the whole *Torah* may be found in one verse (*Habakkuk* 2:4): 'The righteous shall live by his faith.'

Despite such formulations of essence, which were seldom challenged as to their validity, Jewish life did tend to go off on tangents from time to time, and leaders arose to recall it to the Path. When ritualism threatened to eclipse morality, prophets cried out: 'What is the need for all the sacrifices? Cease to do evil; learn to act well.' Similarly, at a later age, when legalism and intellectualism tended to displace piety and devotion, a reaction set in, which has been given the name of Hasidism.

The root of the term 'hasid' is *hesed,* meaning kindness or love—a term integral to all Jewish thought. According to the *Book of Psalms,* where this term occurs repeatedly, a *hasid* is one who acts beyond the letter of the law, in his convictions about God and in his sympathies for fellowman. Rabbi Pinhas of Koritz once defined the difference between a *hasid* and an ordinary Jew as follows: To an ordinary Jew what is forbidden is forbidden; to a *hasid* what is forbidden is forbidden *even if it means his life*. It is that intensity, that extra zeal in preserving the essentials, that may be said to spell the distinctiveness of true Hasidism.

THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

What, then, are the essentials of Judaism? In the Talmud it is said: 'If one wishes to become a *hasid,* let him carry out the teachings of the "Fathers".' We turn, therefore, to the *Ethics of the Fathers* for its classical exposition, in these words: The world stands upon three things—upon spiritual knowledge, upon worship, and upon deeds of love. Each of these basic elements calls forth important questions, and each has been subject to varying interpretations in Jewish life and thought.

Torah, or spiritual knowledge, demands of us that we know the ultimate Reality of the universe and the innermost nature of man. In *Genesis* we read that God created the heaven and the earth, and made man in His image. Just what does it mean that a finite world came from an infinite Lord, and how shall we understand an 'Image of God'?

Hasidism, in attempting to formulate its answers to these questions, followed, by and large, in the spirit of the *Kabalah*, the mystical tradition of Judaism. The main ideas of the *Kabalah* are: (a) The universe, as we know it, is the last of a series of emanations from God. The emanations—in concentric circles, as it were—though still part of God, have taken on more and more finiteness according to their 'distance' from the essence of God. Some day, it is assumed, they will be re-the wrong notion (*abhimāna*) that his body is the Self, and all the attributes of transmigratoriness come to be superimposed upon the Self. When the real nature of the Self is realized through the knowledge conveyed by *śabda*, the false knowledge of the Self disappears and the attributes of transmigratoriness could no more be associated with the Self. Scripture says: 'He, verily, who knows the supreme Brahman, becomes Brahman himself;'[41] and so a person who realizes the Self or Brahman which is free from evil, old age, death, etc. gets himself lifted from the destructive whirlpool of *samsāra*. So long as a person identifies his Self with the body, he is subject to the misery caused by the limiting adjunct, viz. body. In the absence of the knowledge that his Self is the ultimate reality and that it is non-dual, he thinks that there are objects other than the Self, which he should strive for and that there are persons for whom he should suffer in the body. He struggles desiring something for himself, something else for his son, etc. and gets involved in the cycle of births and deaths. But all this is impossible for the man who sees everything as the Self. Scripture testifies to this when it says: 'If a man knows the Self as "I am this", then desiring what and for whose sake will he suffer in the body?'[42] Since embodiment or the association with body is the result of false knowledge, it gets removed when the false knowledge disappears at the rise of right knowledge; and so a person who has realized the Self is non-embodied or bodiless even while alive. That is why the Upaniṣad says: 'Him, verily, who is non-embodied, pleasure and pain do not touch.'[43] In short, there is no transmigratoriness as before in the case of him who has realized Brahman as the Self; he, however, who has transmigratoriness as before, has not realized Brahman as the Self. Hence the advocates of this view maintain that, since the realization of the Self takes place through the knowledge conveyed by the Upaniṣadic texts, the utility of *karma*, meditation, etc. is ruled out.[44]

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Ever since the beginning of Judaism in the days of Abraham, a process of accretion and selection has been going on. The Five Books of Moses, according to Orthodox tradition, contain 613 *mitzvot* or precepts—all, theoretically, of equal importance. Yet, within the *Tradition* itself, innumerable distinctions and classifications are made. Moses at Mount Sinai announced but Ten Basic Principles, and no more. The prophet Micah stressed only three: to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. And certain rabbis of the Talmud even ventured to compress all the commandments into one. The great Hillel, a Palestinian sage who lived just before the beginning of the Christian era, declared: 'That which is hurtful to thee, do not to thy neighbour. This is the whole doctrine. The rest is commentary.' Rabbi Nachman, a Babylonian scholar of the fourth century, urged that the spirit of the whole *Torah* may be found in one verse (*Habakkuk* 2:4): 'The righteous shall live by his faith.'

Despite such formulations of essence, which were seldom challenged as to their validity, Jewish life did tend to go off on tangents from time to time, and leaders arose to recall it to the Path. When ritualism threatened to eclipse morality, prophets cried out: 'What is the need for all the sacrifices? Cease to do evil; learn to act well.' Similarly, at a later age, when legalism and intellectualism tended to displace piety and devotion, a reaction set in, which has been given the name of Hasidism.

The root of the term 'hasid' is *hesed,* meaning kindness or love—a term integral to all Jewish thought. According to the *Book of Psalms,* where this term occurs repeatedly, a *hasid* is one who acts beyond the letter of the law, in his convictions about God and in his sympathies for fellowman. Rabbi Pinhas of Koritz once defined the difference between a *hasid* and an ordinary Jew as follows: To an ordinary Jew what is forbidden is forbidden; to a *hasid* what is forbidden is forbidden *even if it means his life.* It is that intensity, that extra zeal in preserving the essentials, that may be said to spell the distinctiveness of true Hasidism.

THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

What, then, are the essentials of Judaism? In the Talmud it is said: 'If one wishes to become a *hasid,* let him carry out the teachings of the "Fathers".' We turn, therefore, to the *Ethics of the Fathers* for its classical exposition, in these words: The world stands upon three things—upon spiritual knowledge, upon worship, and upon deeds of love. Each of these basic elements calls forth important questions, and each has been subject to varying interpretations in Jewish life and thought.

Torah, or spiritual knowledge, demands of us that we know the ultimate Reality of the universe and the innermost nature of man. In *Genesis* we read that God created the heaven and the earth, and made man in His image. Just what does it mean that a finite world came from an infinite Lord, and how shall we understand an 'Image of God'?

Hasidism, in attempting to formulate its answers to these questions, followed, by and large, in the spirit of the *Kabalah,* the mystical tradition of Judaism. The main ideas of the *Kabalah* are: (a) The universe, as we know it, is the last of a series of emanations from God. The emanations—in concentric circles, as it were—though still part of God, have taken on more and more finiteness according to their 'distance' from the essence of God. Some day, it is assumed, they will be re-absorbed into His essence, at the end of a cycle of creation. (b) Man is the apex, and, in a sense a pivot, in this whole evolutionary and involutionary process. For man, through his consciousness, has been granted by God the privilege of seeing himself as part of this cosmic scheme. And he, by the grace of God, has a choice. He may identify himself with the physical creation, for *he has a body;* or he may identify himself with the spiritual Source of creation, for *he is a soul.*

The Kabalists and the Hasidim both sought *Torah*; that is to say, both were striving to know the spiritual truth about the world and man, but they differed in the areas of their preoccupation. Whereas the Kabalists directed their attention primarily to the mysteries of the universe, the Hasidim concentrated upon the knowledge of the Self. This latter interest led them more and more to the firm conviction that man is inherently divine.

Of course, this was nothing astoundingly new. Countless generations before them had affirmed that man is a creature of God. But the surprise and the fervour with which they made this same affirmation was new. It is told of Rabbi Levi Yitzhok of Berditchev that once, on an ordinary weekday, he sent word to all his townspeople that they stop their work immediately and assemble at the public square, for he had exceptional news to tell them. Many balked at this interference with their regular routines, but, even if only out of curiosity, they came and waited impatiently for the news. When all were assembled, the Rabbi solemnly announced: I want everyone to know that *there is a God, and we are His children!*

STRIVING TO REALIZE GOD

Religion truly begins when the desire is born within a human heart to *actualize* the divine potential. Until then we have only theory or theology. This next stage is known in Judaism as *Avodah,* which has the twofold meaning of work and worship, and which we may translate as spiritual practice.

Here too, strictly speaking, Hasidism made no innovations. It had long been known that most people, in the work that they do, are motivated by envy of others, by a hankering for physical enjoyment, or by worldly ambition. And, long ago, in the ethics of the *Tradition,* it had been clearly taught that 'jealousy, lust, and the seeking of personal glory destroy a man's life'. Moreover, the antidotes to these poisons had also been prescribed: ritual and prayer! By religious practices and turning to God, a person is enabled to overcome selfishness, passion, and pride. Yes, these truths were part and parcel of Jewish teaching. At the same time, it was quite obvious that, except in rare instances, the desired results were not being obtained.

The Hasidic teachers, in affirming seriously that man has within him the Spark of the Divine, began searching diligently for more effective ways of making that Spark manifest. They did not discard ritual and prayer, but rather tried to get to the root of them. (This is at once a conservative and radical approach, even as the word 'radical' itself points to the root.) What is the root of ritual? What is the root of prayer? In simplest terms, they said: Ritual is physical activity directed to God; prayer is mental activity directed to God.

Why do we work? Ordinarily we work to fulfil needs and desires. But human needs and desires exist only when we are without God. With God, all our needs and desires cease. This is the idea behind the traditional Jewish Sabbath, a day dedicated to God. On that day no 'secular' work is to be done. And what is secular work? It is defined as any deliberate effort on our part to change the natural or social environment for our own use. Since on the Sabbath—when it is conscientiously observed—we feel God's presence in a special way, we are then more disposed to accept what *is,* what God has set for us. There is no need for change, for manipulation, for control. Hence, the possibility of Sabbath rest.

But of course, as commonly observed, this is only a token, it is only symbolic, inasmuch as, on the other days of the week, we revert right back to secular work, assuming and feeling that without this work we would surely perish. That is why, even within the conventional *Tradition*, the prayer was voiced: May the All-Merciful One enable us to reach the stage of 'all Sabbath', when our entire life will reflect a genuine faith in Him.

The Hasidim, as might be expected, were especially concerned about this. They wanted all their acts to be religious acts, all their work to be 'ritual'. This inevitably led to a growing appreciation of the importance of motivation in action. It is the *intention* accompanying one's efforts (they realized) that determines the direction. Outwardly, work and ritual might look exactly alike; however, in ordinary work the intention is to achieve a personal end, whereas in ritual the intention is to come closer to God.

In this process, one can easily see how the regulation of the mind becomes all-important. The Hebrew term for 'intention', or mental direction, is *kavanah*. In Hasidic practice, *kavanah* assumes a central role, for it is recognized as the heart of all worship. Through *kavanah*, even work becomes a form of worship, and the reality of *Avodah*—in its twofold cast—comes fully into its own.

The story is told that once the Baal-Shem Tov, founder of the Hasidic movement, was taken to a certain synagogue, but he refused to enter. 'I cannot enter', he explained, 'because this synagogue is "saturated" with prayers'. His listeners were astonished at this remark, until he explained further. 'Prayers when properly directed', he told them, 'ascend to ever higher spheres. But the many prayers recited in this synagogue were without *kavanah*, without spiritual wings. They still clutter the earth, and crowd the premises in all their density'.

LIFE OF A GREAT TEACHER

Once *Torah* and *Avodah*—spiritual knowing and spiritual striving—are adequately pursued, the *third* pillar of faith—what may be termed spiritual sharing—almost invariably follows. For it is through oneness with God and our own true self, that we find our oneness with one another.

Martin Buber, in his works on Hasidism, stresses that the significant thing about the *Zadikim*, or Hasidic teachers, is that each of them was surrounded by a community that lived a brotherly life. In the tradition of Moses, of whom it is written 'and he went down from the mount (of Revelation) to the people', they too translated worship into service.

Hasidism brought about a great transformation in Jewish life—at least for a time, and at least within certain areas that had previously been arid. Simon Dubnow, the historian, asserted that Hasidism should be classed 'among the most momentous spiritual revolutions' that have influenced Jewish social life. 'The aim of Hasidism was to change not the belief, but the believer.'

At a dreary and oppressive time, after the Jews of Eastern Europe had suffered severe persecution and after much of the Jewish world had been tragically disillusioned by a false 'messianic' hope, Rabbi Israel Baal-Shem came upon the scene as a redeemer that was real. As Solomon Schechter points out in his *Studies in Judaism*: to the Hasidim, the Baal-Shem is not just a man who established a theory or set forth a system, 'he himself was the incarnation of a theory and his whole life the revelation of a system,' and in telling of his life they omitted little of what is 'proper to an *avatāra*'.

The Baal-Shem's parents, who lived in Moldavia at the end of the 17th century, were pious and God-fearing people, of spotless rectitude. Folk tradition relates that to them in their old age it was announced in a vision that they would have a son, destined to enlighten the eyes of all Israel, and that he should be so named, in accordance with the verse: 'Thou art my servant, Israel, in whom

I will be glorified'. Soon after his birth, the parents died, but the child was carefully tended in the community. From his infancy Israel seemed to be conscious of a lofty mission. The customary instruction did not satisfy him, and at school he frequently disappeared, preferring the solitude of the woods surrounding his Roumanian village. Later he became assistant to a school-master. He pursued this work in his own dedicated way, and even while taking the children to and from the synagogue, he would sing with them and teach them how to pray.

Because of his strict honesty and piety, Israel was often chosen by the townspeople to be the arbiter of disputes. In one instance, one of the parties was so pleased with his help that he offered his own daughter in marriage. Israel, who by a deeper intuition knew that she was destined for him, accepted the offer. Shortly thereafter, the bride's father died, and for a number of years the impoverished couple suffered many hardships. Despite the outward privations, however, Israel continually progressed in his spiritual life. For a long time he dwelt alone in the Carpathian mountains, giving himself wholly to devotion and contemplation. His wife was a true helpmate to him in his struggles, and he regarded her with reverence as a saint in her own right.

It was not until he had passed his fortieth year that he chose to reveal to some persons his true character and mission. His public work was carried on as rabbi at Medziboz (in Podolia), and it was here that he attracted about him an ever growing multitude of adherents. Within ten years of active work (the last ten of his life), Rabbi Israel—now known as *Baal-Shem Tov,* Kind Master of God's Name—had a following of some 10,000 Hasidim. But these were not his main strength. He had also trained a nucleus of intimate disciples, who were to carry on his mission when he was gone. Thus it became possible that ten years after his passing the movement could number 100,000. And this, too, was only a beginning.

Many events of a wondrous nature have been attributed to 'the Basht' (Baal-Shem-Tov), but as Dr. Schechter rightly states, it is not as a worker of miracles but as a religious teacher that we should view him. The Baal-Shem's special province was the higher spirituality of life—faith in God and love of men—in contradistinction to the legalism and casuistry which preoccupied the minds of so many of the Jewish leaders of his day.

In his teachings, the Baal-Shem forcefully stressed the presence of God everywhere, and the potential good in everyone. Creation was not a single act in a distant hoary past, but an unending manifestation of God's power, wisdom, and love. Similarly Revelation was not an ancient isolated event, but a continuing vivid communion between God and man. Upon such doctrines as foundation, the Baal-Shem fashioned an edifice of hope and regeneration for his people. Not sin but redemption was his theme. No one has sunk so low as to be unable to raise himself to God—was one of his favourite sayings.

It follows, therefore, (to use his own words) that 'the ideal of man is to be a Revelation himself; clearly to recognize himself as a manifestation of God.' 'The object of the whole *Torah* is that man should become a *Torah* himself.' It is to this end that our prayer-life should be directed. The wise man does not trouble the king with petitions about trifles. His one desire is to be admitted into the king's presence: that will be his highest good.

What follows also from this spirit is a wholesome, equalitarian view of man. 'Let no one think himself better than his neighbour, for each serves God in his own way.' The Baal-Shem made it a practice to minister to the poor and to the illiterate men and women of the community; yes, even to the sinners and outcasts—those whom other teachers disdained. One account tells of a woman of shameful repute whose very life was threatened by her family, whom the Baal-Shem rescued in body and spirit. This is but one of a host of loving deeds that generation after generation delighted to tell and retell in the name of their beloved Master.

A HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The rapidity in the growth of the Hasidic movement presented its pitfalls as well as opportunities, and both became evident with the passing of the years. Some of the leaders, especially in later years, drifted from the strict standards that such a movement demands. 'Dynasties' of hereditary succession came into vogue, and a veering to material interests distorted the image of the work. Some, in controversy with opponents, even resorted to political devices, which cast a heavy shadow upon all. Yet the remarkable thing is that those who earnestly and intelligently sought spiritual sustenance were replenished.

The Hasidic stream flowed with great force in the communities of Poland and Russia. The Baal-Shem Tov himself (1700-1760) at first bequeathed his undisputed spiritual leadership to Rabbi Dov Baer, Preacher of Meseritz, who was the active teacher, and to Rabbi Jacob Joseph of Polona, who through his writings established a literary tradition. It was then among the disciples of the Preacher (following his death in 1772) that varying emphases arose. One was that of Rabbi Shneur Zalman, author of the *Tanya-Teaching*. This may be characterized as the more reasoned, doctrinal, or systematic approach. Another emphasis was strongly emotional, as touched upon above through the narrative about Rabbi Levi Yitzhok. Both had strong group appeal, among the followers of corresponding temperament and background. But also there were others, like Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav, who pursued a largely personal course. Rabbi Nachman once remarked: 'Every day I am a different person'. He emphasized flexibility and solitude, individual discipline and growth.

Opposition to Hasidism within Jewish life arose from two quarters. Talmudists, who feared that the Hasidim were making inroads into established law and ritual, attacked the 'radicalism' of the new enthusiasts. Modernists, on the other hand, castigated them for their 'emotionalism' and their seeming rejection of reason. However, Hasidism possessed enough vitality to survive both battles—but not without serious inner and outer scars.

As one looks back upon the life of the Baal-Shem Tov and upon the essential quest of his early disciples, one finds a form of Judaism that is both sensible and inspiring—one that has in it warmth of heart and breadth of mind; one that, fundamentally, ought to appeal to the modernist and the traditionalist alike. Yet, today, organized Hasidism is largely isolated from almost all other movements in Jewish life. This is a great loss for everyone.

THE NEED FOR ESSENTIALS

The pristine purity and strength of Hasidism was derived from its insistence upon the primary, rather than the secondary, factors in religion. It did not negate the secondary factors, but simply declared that they were important, and could be meaningful only after first things had been taken care of first. The primary factors are: sincerity of heart and mind in affirming the presence of God and the divinity in man. The secondary factors are law and ritual.

The religious malady of putting second things first is, alas, prevalent among all religious denominations. In Jewish life, as elsewhere, it shows itself in the disproportionate amount of time and energy commonly spent on resolving ritualistic or legalistic questions. The very preoccupation with such matters, while more vital matters wait, is a diversion. And such diversion leads to division.

The true Hasid, as here conceived, is a true mystic—namely one who refuses to be content with any form of spirituality *until he has personally experienced it*. His attitude is: Better to discard the name of God completely, than to use it perfunctorily, with no *Reality* behind it! His is the genuine scientific approach, except that, instead of searching for truth in test tubes or outer space, he searches for it within his own emotions and consciousness. And what he finds—to the degree that it is verifiable experience—is indeed irrefutable truth. With it, ordinarily, two conclusions are demonstrated: One—that his own heritage, with its spiritual disciplines of prayer and practice, is valid, for it has effectuated his discovery. Second—that there is a common ground for all the faiths, inasmuch as his own findings coincide, in a basic measure, with the findings of others who have similarly explored. Within every major religion the great souls have found the Beloved of their search. We may call them prophets or sages, saints or seers, or simply enlightened children of God. Their titles do not matter, but their recurrent appearance in every age and dedicated culture—that phenomenon of history—is of supreme significance.

(*Note*: Hasidism has here been taken, in a sociological or recent historical sense, to refer to the movement started by the Baal-Shem Tov. Ideologically, however, this term as here understood, may apply to many religiously creative periods in Jewish history. There were 'Hasidim' among the followers of Moses and the Prophets: among the Essenes and the Pharisees; among the Rabbis and Commentators of the Talmud; among the Pietists and Poets of Medieval Europe; among the Kabalists of Spain and Safed. These are the more identifiable groupings. As to individual Hasidim, there surely was no generation of Israel totally without them.)

HINDU STATES AND THEIR MUSLIM SUBJECTS IN MEDIEVAL INDIA

By Sri S. N. Qanungo

During the pre-Mughal period of the Indo-Muslim history there were three belts of Hindu states: first, the Himalayan group comprising petty principalities in Kashmir, Garhwal, and Nepal valleys; the second, the central belt consisting of the Rajput states of Mewar, Marwar, Jalor, Ranthambhor, and petty states of Central India, and also the Ganga kingdom of Orissa; the third belt was that of the Vijayanagar Empire and its feudatories south of the Tuṅgabhadrā river as far as the Cape Comorin. The first belt had been raided by the Turks and Afghans; but except in Kashmir no large body of Muslim population is known to have been left behind by the invaders. The second belt of states sometimes sheltered Muslim refugees, but had no considerable body of Muslim subjects as to necessitate the formulation of a definite policy. Dr. A. B. M. Habibullah tends to give us an impression that to the people of north India, the Turk's light-borne Islam could not conceal the familiar visitor, in whom even some of the Rajputs could see a distant kinsman. 'Hindu India, therefore, contained elements whose intensity of opposition to the invaders was liable to be qualified by racial sympathies.'[1] It was scarcely so in actual practice. The Rajputs have been true to their chivalrous duty of extending protection (*śaraṇa*), even jeopardizing themselves, to those who seek it. Hamir of Ranthambhor gave refuge to the Neo-Muslim Mongol rebels against Alauddin Khilji. The Rajah of Jodhpur refused to surrender the families of Amir Khan and again Jaswant Rao Holkar to the English, though Jodhpur suffered terribly at the hands of those notorious characters of Indian history. The Rajput states during this period do not appear to have ruled over any considerable section of Muslim population. Maharana Kumbha destroyed mosques; but that was outside his own territory. Such excesses were acts of war.

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[1] Habibullah, *Foundation of Muslim Rule in India*, p. 312.

In eastern India the kings of Orissa had a negligible number of Muslim subjects during the pre-Mughal period. In Bengal there was a short period of vigorous Hindu rule under Rajah Ganesh and his son for about a decade in the second quarter of the fifteenth century. This period of Hindu rule came as an interruption to the regime of the Ilyas Shahi dynasty of Bengal. Rajah Ganesh ruled over the whole of Bengal with a large and powerful Muslim population. The author of *Riyaz-us-Salātin*, relying on some Muslim legends of later origin, has depicted Ganesh as an intolerant tyrant and oppressor of Muslim subjects. But Ferishta, who flourished two hundred years before the author of *Riyaz-us-Salātin*, writes that Ganesh was a very popular ruler with his Muslim subjects and that he honoured Islam and Muslim divines. The condition of the Muslim subjects of Vijayanagar has been described as laudable by many reliable authorities. The Hindu monarchs of Vijayanagar were ideal rulers of a composite population. Barbosa writes: 'The king allows such freedom that every man may come and go, and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance and without enquiry whether he is a Christian, Jew, Moor, or Hindu.' The Muslims in the kingdom of Vijayanagar had possibly no other grievance except that the slaughter of cow was not permitted.

During the Mughal period the most powerful Hindu state with a large Muslim population was the Maratha Kingdom founded by Shivaji, which in the eighteenth century expanded into the empire of Brāhmaṇ Peshwas. Shivaji's policy to his Muslim subjects requires no further light than what Sir. J. N. Sarkar observes about it: 'His reign brought peace and order to his country, assured the protection of women's honour and the religion of all sects without distinction, extended the royal patronage to the truly pious men of all creeds (Muslims no less than Hindus), and presented equal opportunites to all his subjects by opening the public service to talent irrespective of caste or creed.'[2] Though himself a devout Hindu, Shivaji provided subsistence at his own cost for *Pīrs*, notably Bala Yaqut of Keloshi (4 miles south of Bankot on the Ratnagiri coast) and employed a number of Muslim officers, such as Siddi Halal, Siddi Sambal, Siddi Misri, Daulat Khan, Nur Khan, and Munshi Haidar. The Muslim *qāzīs* in his dominion were given legal recognition. Shivaji's religious policy deserves admiration of all generations.

The condition of a subject community living under the government of another community professing a different religion becomes intolerable if the ruling community follows a definite policy of religious conversion, no matter whether by force, persuasion, or political bribe. Having been founded on the ruins of Aurangazeb's empire, the Maratha empire might have followed a policy of retaliation. But the Marathas had no quarrel with Islām and the Muslims in general but against Aurangazeb who carried fire and sword into their land. We do not come across any punitive legislation against the Muslims except cow slaughter, which forms no part of Islam as the sacrifice of buffalo in preference to a goat does not form a part of Hinduism. Muslims were not debarred from holding offices under the Peshwa's Government; but it must be admitted that fewer Muslims held higher appointments under Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao than Hindus either in the civil or military department under Aurangazeb. This was because the Muslims were only a handful in the south, and the abler section among them hardly sufficed even for the Muslim state of Hyderabad. But when Maratha states were founded north of the Narmadā, the proportion of Muslims in the soldiery grew apace.

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[2] Sarkar, *Shivaji*, p. 886.

The position of Ibrahim Khan Gardi or Rana Khan Bhai was not inferior in the Maratha army to any Hindu commander; and no Hindu served the Peshwas or Mahadji Sindhia more loyally than their Muslim officers. This was due to the fact that in the eighteenth century our people clung to their characteristic fidelity (*namak-halāli*) and the doctrine of *swāmī-bhakti*.

The Muslim subjects in the Maratha states were not economically worse off than the Hindus. There were no discriminating tariffs imposed by the government like those which Aurangazeb had enforced in his empire. Small trades and arts and handicrafts such as embroidery, dress-making, *mīnākārī* etc. were generally in the hands of the Muslims. The services of good Muslim *hakīms* (medical practitioners) from outside were requisitioned and many Muslims were employed as army surgeons for bone-setting etc. The interior economy of the household of the Peshwa was also a replica of the imperial household of Delhi organized into departments like Jamādārkhānā, Jiratkhānā, Kabūtarkhānā, etc. Muslims were indispensable for the Peshwa's pegions, gardens, zoo, hunting establishment, and stables of horses and elephants. The Maratha rulers continued the use of the Hijri era in preference to the Hindu era Śaka or Vikram.

In the Maratha states there was no discrimination between a Muslim and a Hindu in the eye of law. Law was fair to the Muslims even though administered by a Śāstrī (Hindu pandit). Once a Brāhmaṇ woman committed adultery with one Sultana Sikalgar; the woman was thrown into prison and the Muslim, found not guilty, was released.[3] Nobody could escape punishment when accused of crime against the Muslims. One such case is reported by Panduranga Damodar in respect of a Hindu servant of one high Maratha officer. The servant had killed his fellow Muslim servant, seized his wife, and turned her out after cutting her nose.[4] For a crime of dacoity, Baba Khan and Bhikan Khan along with Lakshman Khumna were ordered to have their one leg and one arm each to be broken.[5]

The Maratha states recognized officially one Muslim festival and that was *Id-ul-Fitr*. We come across special item of expenditure entered as *Chānd-Rātri Kharch*. Guns were also fired from forts on the night previous to the *Id*. In the budget of expenditure in the Singha-garh fort, we find provision for Muslim festivities, particularly of *Chānd-Rātri*, for distributing *bīda* of betel, and volleys of musketry and guns.[6] In other respects also Muslims were allowed free exercise of their religion without the payment of any special tax. The government protected all places of worship and sanctioned money for their repairs. The revenue account of Shivaji in the year of his coronation at Rajgarh has an item—rupees fifty lakhs in assignments of land to *devasthān* and mosques.[7] Only rupees eighteen per annum was a charge on the revenue of village Kodhe for the *Urus* of *Pīr* Makhdum Shaikh Salla.[8] In the city of Poona there were two *dargāhs* (places of Muslim worship): one was of Sayyid Saadat and another of Shaikh Salla. The government sanctioned Rs. 1,400/- for their repairs in April, 1768.[9] There was a special item in the budget called *Khairāt Kharch* for charity to Muslim institutions as distinguished from the items, *dharma-dāya* and *Śrāvaṇdakṣiṇā* for the Hindus. There is an entry in the diary of the Peshwas that on the *Vijayā-daśamī* day, a sum of money as *Khairāt Kharch* was given as in previous years to the *Pīr* of Shaik Salla's *dargāh* at Poona.[10] These establishments enjoyed rent-free lands. In spite of their orthodoxy, the Peshwas also offered homage to these Muslim shrines. A vow was made to distribute *shirinī* (sacramental food) when the tusks of the elephant were cut; Rs. 25/- was paid to Muslim mahouts on that occasion in April, 1731.[11] There is an entry in Kashi Bai's charity to Muslims: a piece of cloth worth Rs. 2/8; *nazr* to the *Pīr* of Sayyid Saadat one rupee; small coins for distribution to fakirs—this was to pray for the the cure of Raghunath Sadashiv, and Janardan Pant who had attacks of small-pox.[12] When two rival institutions among the Muslims quarrelled over precedence in the annual *tāziyah* procession, the Peshwa had to settle it.[13] Two chelas of a *Kabīr Panthī* fakir, Shaha Musalman and Satnava Gosavi claimed the allowance which the deceased saint used to get; the government, after a close enquiry, made the award in favour of Shaha Musalman.[14]

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[3] *Selections from Peshwa Daftar*, Vol. 43, p. 123.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 135.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 114.

[6] *Ibid.*, Vol. 45, p. 39.

[7] *Ibid.*, Vol. 31, p. 31.

[8] *Ibid.*, Vol. 31, p. 18.

[9] *Ibid.*, Vol. 22, p. 117.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

The Brāhmaṇ Peshwas were, however, puritans. They put every obstacle in the way of reconversion of a Hindu who, under most pathetic circumstances, had accepted Islam to escape horrible death. The Peshwas departed from the liberal traditions of Shivaji and Jija Bai, and took to a narrow reactionary policy, and even persecuted those Hindus who admitted back to their fold such converts without an expensive *prāyascitta* (expiatory ceremony), according to the *śāstras*. Only one instance would suffice: 'One Mahadaji Narayan executes the Peshwa's order regarding the excommunication of Brāhmaṇs of Paithan who admitted back to their caste one Narhari Ranalkar who, being forcibly converted to Islam after the disaster of Panipat, became *yavana-maya* (outcaste), and as such was considered not eligible for purification in the opinion of a *sabhā* of Vaidics and Pandits.'[15] Cow slaughter within the Peshwa's territory was forbidden by law. One Keso Bhikaji received a sharp censure for his neglect of stopping cow-killing by the Muslims: 'The Muslims kill cows; and you have not taken any action.'[16] The government officials of Konkan were ordered to help one Antaji Naik in preventing cows being taken away by the butchers of Bombay and Salsette. But Hindus could not take law in their own hands against the Muslims for such an offence. One Keshav Rao Jagannath reports to the Peshwa how some persons were arrested for killing a cow at night and eating its flesh, and prays that they should be meted out heavy and deterrent punishment.[17] Such an offence, however, was not dealt with death sentence. One Daud Shah Fakir was fined Rs. 60/- for killing a cow.[18] Thus the general impression which the Brāhminical state of Maharashtra leaves on us is that it was much more liberal than the Muslim state of Aurangazeb; but it may be honestly said that its outlook was somewhat narrow and its policy a little reactionary in comparison with the ideal administration of Akbar.

We shall now turn to the condition of Muslim subjects of the Gaekwads of Baroda. The Gaekwads confirmed to the pious Muslim grantees all their lands, emoluments, and privileges which they used to enjoy under the previous government. One *parvana* of Damaji dated 4-11-1746 to a district official runs thus: '... Whatever *inām* (gift) land and emoluments the *Qāzī* of Dabhoi under Mahmud Shah enjoyed in the past should be confirmed to him; he is to be disturbed in no way; and no more complaint shall reach me.'[19] Another such order dated 18-4-1750 was issued in favour of another *Qāzī*, Sayyad Ghulam Husain.[20] We do not come across any document relating to the special protection of the cow and the Brāhmaṇ in Baroda. Muslim places of worship, even in close vicinity to Hindu temples, were tolerated. The rulers of Baroda made ampler provisions for the celebration of Muslim festivals than the Poona government. It was customary for the ruler of Baroda to be present at the time of the *Id* prayer, and to give a *khilāt* and cash reward to the *imām* who led the prayer. The fort of Dabhoi even to this day stands as the reflex of the mind of the founder of the Baroda state. We read in the stone inscription (dated 14-2-1734) on the Burnhanpur Gate of the fort: 'Near the Baroda gate is the fiery *Pīr* Sayyad Mukhiya where the *mlecchas* offer prayers and burn lights fed with ghee; in the direction of *Ishān* (north-east) stands Shamburj. There stands the *dargāh* of *Pīr* Shad which is a source of much delight everyday. In the vicinity there is an awe-striking image of Narsimha called by the Muslims Ghaib Pir or Invincible Saint. Near the *Chabutrā* (platform) is the tomb of a great *Pīr*, Qazi Purandar.'[21] We have here a happy picture of idols and tombs of Muslim saints sharing the veneration of the Hindu master of the fort of Dabhoi. Baroda was in many respects a more enlightened and ideal Hindu state than the Brāhminical government of Poona.

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[11] *Ibid.*, p. 45.

[12] *Ibid.*, Vol. 43, p. 91.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 31.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 120.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 118.

[18] *Ibid.*, Vol. 22, p. 131.

[19] *Historical Selections* from Baroda State Records, Vol. I, p. 22.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

Thus the contemporary writings furnish the evidence that instances are few when the Hindu states in medieval India have been guilty of crimes in the name of religion.

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[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 132-34.

AESTHETIC APPROACH TO REALITY

By Dr. K. C. Varadachari

Experience is about the most important word in all discourse. All knowledge is based on experience and enriches it. But the term experience does not by itself help us to understand the complexity of it. Firstly because experience belongs to or rather is distinguished into several levels of human life. Ordinarily we distinguish between the sense-level experience and the experiences of other levels, such as those of art and ethics and philosophy. The basic ground of all experiences seems to rest on the sensorium which awaits interpretation and rationalization in order to make experience understandable. In fact experience is something awaiting to be interpreted or understood and is not by itself understood as such. It is the raw material for thinking about rather than thinking as such. Similarly, we find it is sometimes difficult to express what we experience sensorily; and this unverbalized and unverbalizable experience is considered to be sub-expressible or inexpressible.

Of course animals and other sub-human creatures have no capacity to verbalize or express their experiences except perhaps through action or gesture or emotion or in terms of instinct, which reveals the significant fact that they know but are not even conscious of what they know except that it is revealed in the uncanny intelligent way they respond to situations. Experience in instinct is below the threshold of conscious activity and vocal expressibility. But this is not the only occasion of inexpressibility of experience. We also know that when one tries to understand through one's reason or its categories one arrives at a point when one can no longer use one's rational and relational categories. Such being the case, it has become necessary to assume that there is a level or core of the inexpressible, if not irrational, datum in experience which is sometimes taken to be the 'thing-in-itself' of experience—the reality. This inexpressible experience is sometimes identified with the experience of the ultimate Reality. We can see that this assumption in a sense negatively asserts the irrational core of experience to be the ultimate Real. But it is equally likely that it is supra-rational and as such the language of logical rationality does not apply to it.

Experience thus falls within the field of expression—verbal or actional—though it is equally possible that expression is impossible in cases of experience which are either instinctive or supra-rational.

We know, however, that certain so-called irrational experiences such as becoming or change had remained as such, that is to say inexpressible, till a genius arrived to show that it is equally rational and expressible in terms of concrete thinking like any other concept such as causality or thing or oneness or manyness.

Thus every experience, from the most rudimentary to the most mystical, demands expression in some way and is in a state of challenge so to speak till it either evolves towards expression or helps or seeks the help of some genius to evolve to its fullest expression.

To speak about the inexpressible either in words or gesture or art is to affirm only the fact that an experience is beyond the capacity of the consciousness to express it in any one of the motor functions so to speak—speech or artistic moulding or dance and expression—which involve the motor organs (*karmendriyas*). Music, sculpture, painting and dance and love—all help the expression of the experience; in fact these may be at first self-fulfilling overflow of the emotion of experience or the aesthetic experience. Later, in the realm of communicability to others, arises the conscious and articulated expression of the spontaneous experience.

Thus spontaneous expression is the first expression of the experience which is natural and it is the basis on which the conscious and artificial expressions are erected. For there are always distinguishable two stages in expression, the spontaneous overflow of the experience and the conscious reproduction and perfecting of the expression in painting and in art, which involve several features of consummate skill and observation. The original spontaneity has always an universality of appeal, whereas the expression as art is sophisticated and demands the conscious understanding of the patterns and styles of presentation and forms of imaginative reconstruction and reproduction. This is what we may call the expression for oneself (*svārtha kalpanā*) and expression for others (*parārtha-kalpaṇā*). Some hold that expression for oneself is truer and more beautiful—it is something similar to the demand for art for art's sake; whereas the expression for others—a communication for other's understanding or enjoyment—is what usually goes by the name of artistic reproduction. The former is justly for the spiritual experience of oneself—what every one has himself to attain to in order to understand or enjoy or 'know' in all its full meaning; whereas the latter is what one produces for the enjoyment of others so as to induce in others a sensation or aesthesis similar to one's own. The second is the social use of art while the first is the spiritual work of the aesthetic experience. However, one thing that has to be observed in all experience is that it struggles towards either subject or individual expression or it feels itself frustrated. The second kind of expression is mainly cultivated and in this process, it loses its spontaneity and sometimes, in spite of brilliant technique and innovation, declines and becomes mechanical and finally stereotyped.

Experience and expression, however, are organic to each other and in the development or evolution of aesthetic or logical or ethical mind, expression has always tended to lag behind. Since it is well known that expression is the basis of communication whether in and through art or philosophy or ethics, it has been held that the disciplines of art, philosophy, and ethics are basically levels of expression rather than of experience. This extraordinary and suicidal divorce becomes clearer in philosophy and in ethics, and very much less in aesthetics or art.

There are some influential writers or thinkers who consider that logical truth or ethical good or pragmatic utility should not curb the expression of art or aesthetic experience. To them art is not subject to its being true or good; it can be false and immoral also. Only the claim is that it is something that is and can be imagined. The imagined is in fact the extension of the possibilities of that which is, even as in the case of those who assume that parallel lines will meet at infinity or some such conjectural projection. Thus we know that many things which we have imagined have been made actual—inventions are precisely such. Imagination (*kalpanā*) is not always false but can be such as can become true, and can be made to become true. This extraordinary function of imagination arises surely from the perception of the possibilities of the perceived and in the perceived. However, since not all have the capacity to see such possibility and some see it only when it is pointed out to them, it becomes a social necessity to have such persons who can see these possibilities in the perceived and express them also.

Thus the perceptions of the poet and the inventor are different from those of the layman. The tree does not look alike to all. This relativism apart, there is a different method of seeing or kind of seeing that distinguishes one from the other. Different kinds of consciousness exist and it is necessary to distinguish between them. However, it is possible to expect that training may help one to appreciate everything from multiple standpoints. Whether we accept that the thing so seen has really so many phases or facets or not is, of course, a question that has to be considered in any case.

Aesthetic experience itself has this essential richness of multiple expressibility also, so much so that a complete or whole experience of an object (thing or idea) involves such multiplicity of expression. There is thus, in the matter of all experiences, the dynamic possibility of multiplicities, each one of which individually or all in combination produces effects that exhibit emotional richnesses leading to aesthetic enjoyment or excellence. The sunset, or a panoroma of hills, or even the song of a bird or a note may, therefore, produce in an awakened mind an integral totality completely disproving the theory of pure sensation.

It was Coleridge who remarked about the fourfold nature of evolution of the aesthetic consciousness or awareness—from the lowest to the highest. The first is the awareness of pleasant or unpleasant sensations caused in man by external impressions. It is the consciousness excited by outer impressions that occasions experience of sensuous beauty. This is about the most frequent result of so-called natural beauty—objective in the sense of external. It is the externality that causes it to be called truly objective, uncreated by the mind.

The second level of expansion of consciousness is an enlargement of consciousness which presents forms and it is the formal elements that stand prominently out. There is also the awareness of quantity alike in terms of space. This is the realm of imagination—a movement of the mind in terms of grasping the meaning; it is the area of the inner sense which is dynamically relating itself and exploring the forms. Poets are claimed to perform a 'priestlike function of imagination' and 'every poet is a monk and his imagination his monastery', said Keats. This is an 'arousing and exploration of the expanse of imagination'. Probably it is not restrained by the rationality or truth but it is also a clear awakening of sensibility to the higher work of inner meaningfulness. The poet is his own architect and his own critic.

The third level of expansion of consciousness is to add to imagination the conception or notion. This is said to be the level of intellectual experience of beauty. It is the perception of the universe as a whole. It is a transcendence of the private imagination to the level of the universal apprehension. Hence it is one which includes all things—not only the pleasant and happy but also opens up the dark side of being. There is a gulf that separates the highest yet to be—the bliss of the Vedānta, from the world—the gulf of sorrow and agony that divides the realms of imagination and intellectual beauty. The poet has full need of deepening powers of sympathy and empathy—an extension of one's frontiers of consciousness so as to include everything. The sorrow, the agony and the suffering, which are the characteristics of life, as some philosophers put it, have to be seen in a new light. Instead of avoiding all that pain and suffering in the search for beauty or happiness, one should taste the bitter and the sweet and rejoice in their purifying properties. A deeper meaning in creation and self appears in the process and lifts man to a higher kind of awareness. The imaginations of pleasure and inward joy are overcome by the experience of their contraries that tend to enrich the inner being rather than impoverish the inner sense. A new flame is kindled within. Poetry becomes a criticism of life so to speak and reaches universal level. One begins to contemplate on the eternal value in the context of the transient.

During the experience of intellectual beauty we are almost at the threshold of wisdom—a different dimension of our knowledge, and it involves the crossing of the gulf—the world of another significance that includes the catharsis or purgatory of suffering and sympathy.

We cannot altogether think that this level of intellectual beauty is similar to what Bergson called intellectual sympathy, utilized for knowing a thing as it is in itself. It is perhaps a consciousness that passes from the subjectivity of imaginative beauty—the conversion of imagination—to the subjectivity of the objective which originally appeared as sensuous beauty. But since in aesthetics truth is not so much the aim at the earlier phases, here for the first time we become aware of the trueness of aesthetics, or what we may call the aesthetic truth of things, where the meaning that transcends form or is implicit in all form or forms begins to gleam out of all experiences. This might present a duality of experience—the light and the shade, the tragic and the comic, harmony and disharmony, sorrow and joy that almost express themselves in terms of each other; but there is co-existence and significance in each other.

But this experience of intellectual beauty is not philosophy but only philosophic insight that prehends the deep identity in all by an insight or apprehension of a higher law or the archetype. The highest experience is said to be one of *identity*—the apprehension or awareness of beauty in all things without exception.

The four dimensions or extensions of consciousness are not opposed to one another; they gradually reveal its transition and evolution or integration and assimilation. The intellectual beauty does not annul the sensuous but absorbs it, and makes it grow in significance and meaning: the intellectual beauty does not appear to be some new kind of imposition over the sensuous but to be growing out of it, maturing in it, and reaching its fullest height. The flaw in art-experience would be there where any one stage is either arrested or stagnated for reasons of enjoyment and repetition or imitation; or where it is not gradually sublimated by the fire of the intellectual understanding in and through the sensuous that reveals the seamy side of beauty.

The above analysis is essentially a method of trying to understand how aesthetically one grows into a deep and basic knowledge of a different order—in one sense superior to the other ways of knowing open to man. Once one arrives at this identity-awareness, one can see that the other ways of knowledge, are in a way indebted to this basic means of awareness.

OUR LONELINESS—CAN VEDĀNTA REMEDY IT?

By Swami Nityabodhananda

In recent times we have been successful, by the aid of science, to increase the number of our recreations and diversions and thus to create for man 'society or company' and thus to escape loneliness. Cinema, radio, television—these are not simple diversions, nor news-carriers, but agencies to which man can turn when he is alone and find 'company'. They are, I would say, solitude cures. I am sure you would have witnessed the phenomenon of the person who, in the calm and tranquillity of the heights of Saleve,[1] where all people go for peace from the noisy town, carries in his pocket or in his arms a small radio which goes on crying to the annoyance of those around him. He is the person afraid of solitude and who wants to carry with him its cure, the radio, but yet wants to be in solitude on the mountains or in the forests. We can say that he is the typical product of our civilization, one who is afraid of being alone by himself and hence who is afraid of himself.

With the increase of these material means to remedy or escape loneliness, are we better off than before, are we less lonely than before? We will have to answer 'No'. Man or woman these days is more and more lonely, more and more afraid of solitude, of being alone. He tries his best to combat this loneliness, this fear of being alone by material means, by switching on the radio, by television or by journeys by quick transport to meet dear friends. But his anguish is only increasing, he is more and more in loneliness. The fact that man's efforts to combat this solitude by material means like cinema, radio, etc. fails, shows that this loneliness is a spiritual lack or a spiritual problem and can be remedied only by spiritual means. Loneliness manifests as an anguish.

It is an anguish except for the saint, who has known its spiritual grandeur and has chosen it. The saint or the mystic is never alone in the ordinarily accepted sense of the term, whether he is in the forest or in the town. His love for the world by which he integrates the world in his heart, is the central interest of his life. Making this love efficacious for others is the field of his creativity.

The categories of lonely people fall into three, even as categories of the great fall into three. Perhaps you might have heard of this classification. Some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them. So also some are born lonely, some achieve loneliness and some have loneliness thrust upon them.

The people *born* lonely are the saints and mystics. They are conscious that they are born alone with their spiritual essence whose character is uniqueness or being alone. They are conscious that in this loneliness everything is contained, for it is the Spirit that wants nothing, that lacks nothing. This vision keeps their interest in life and their love for the 'other', for the 'other' is just their reflection. For them loneliness is no anguish but joy and creativity.

Those who *achieve* loneliness are the artists, those who have consecrated themselves to a scientific ideal of research, those who have devoted to altruism; in other words, those who have chosen to be alone with their 'Muse' of whatever dress she is. They are never alone nor are they in anguish, for, in and through their consecration, they add interest to life, they find joy and creativity in their consecration.

Under the third category of 'loneliness *thrust* upon them', come those who, by circumstances are alone or by old age or by their pessimistic or isolationist temperament and attitude. Old men are not always alone.

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[1] Saleve—the mountain-ranges near Geneva.

There are many who continue to be creative in their own way, who select new vocations and interests and *milieus* and keep up their love of life. Even among those on whom loneliness is thrust upon by accident, depriving them of their dear ones, there are many who are resourceful, who begin a new life of creativity. By this process of elimination we find that only those are really lonely who have lost all interest in life, who are incapable of any creativity, of any love. They alone are in anguish. If those who by their spirit of dedication are sometimes in anguish, they have enough dynamism to get over their anguish, whereas, pessimists and isolationists have lost all dynamism to get over their anguish.

The anguish of loneliness is something comparable to the metaphysical anguish. We can not remedy or cure metaphysical anguish by argument or by psychological methods. The anguish is there because of two reasons: we do not know. who we are, in reality, and secondly coupled with this ignorance and because of this ignorance is the fear, a fear that remains as an unconscious memory, of our destruction. These two produce the metaphysical anguish. The remedy to it would be to ask ourselves 'who we are' and get a proper answer.

A proper answer would be that we are both being and non-being, that we are both affirmation and negation, both life and death, both joy and grief and nostalgia. The memory of our physical destruction, death, is an unconscious or pre-Adamic memory in us. It manifests as anguish in various ways and because it is an unconscious memory, we can never find out the cause of the anguish. The way to remedy this anguish is to convince ourselves that we are in reality life and death and more than that. The other day I was talking to a friend. He told me, in the course of the conversation, that he feels an anguish when a cup or glass is broken and he assured me that it was not the sense of loss of money that causes it. I told him, without mentioning the word 'metaphysical anguish', that his anguish comes from the thought that life is short and not long. He should think that the real man in him is eternal, beyond time, break and change, and that it is the apparent man in him that gets anguished by seeing a destruction. He seemed to have heard something capital; he said he would go home and write this idea in his note-book and keep it before him. I do not say that the memory of our destruction is the only cause that produces metaphysical anguish; it is one of the many. Linked with that unconscious memory (here I make a distinction between conscious memory and unconscious memory: Memory of the Pythagoras theorem I have studied is a conscious memory—memory that I may die or that I slept well is an unconscious memory as it is not created by us, but something innate) is the anguish coming from the fear that I may fail in this or that effort of mine, fear that I have not chosen correctly in life, etc. In the same way as anguish comes from the unconscious memory of destruction innate in us, loneliness comes from the unconscious memory of our loneliness. We came all alone in this world and we shall go back also all alone. In the same way as the certitude of our true nature, namely that we are being and non-being, life and death, can chase metaphysical anguish away, so also the conviction of the true nature of our loneliness can remedy the anguish of loneliness. We came alone but with the spiritual essence that is love and creativity.

It is not a physical loneliness that is lying hidden behind our life as an unconscious memory, nor can it be remedied by material means like company of friends or the 'company' of cinema. It is a spiritual loneliness which in other words is a spiritual completeness, a spiritual self-sufficiency. We came with the Spirit which is complete and self-sufficient and which feels in Itself the whole world of friends and things that are dear, not in a material form, but in subtle form.

When we are cut off from the Spirit, our eternal companion, then we feel lonely. The

Spirit, the Atman holds in its heart the capacity to love; it is the unconscious memory to love and when we are cut off from this unconscious memory we feel lonely, isolated. And this loneliness gives us anguish. Witness for instance the saint and the mystic. He is all alone, but because he is always living in the company of the Spirit, he is never alone though far away from the crowds, his life is full of joy, love and creativity. We too have the same base, the same lonely unique Spirit who has been with us from the birth though we are not saints. It is that lonely Spirit that often shows its richness when we are alone. Are we not alone during our best and full moments, When we pray, we are alone before God who is also alone. It was Plotinus who defined mystical experience as the 'flight of the alone to the Alone'. Another mystic defined meditation as 'standing alone and naked before God, our innermost Reality'.

I said we come alone with our self-sufficient spiritual essence and this remains as our unconscious memory. It is necessary that the unconscious memory is alone with our essence, for then only the memory can be spontaneous. In the presence of a stranger we are not spontaneous. Unconscious memory, without coming to the conscious plane as memory inspires and models our actions. Then our actions are spontaneous. Evidently we are not speaking here of mechanical reflexes like typing which are also spontaneous in a mechanical way. For instance, love or the capacity to love is an unconscious memory in us. Acts of love, manifestations of love are effortless when they issue from its unconscious memory. When our actions lose contact with this source, then the very same love becomes aggressive, vindictive, both sailing under the colours of love. Love, effortless and spontaneous, is one of the faculties and the dynamism of the spiritual solitude with which we came into this world. Creativity is another faculty.

When I use the word love here, it is not to be confounded with the ordinary use of the word. I would prefer to say, the capacity to love, the power to love, the power to create, which can exist, without objectivation, without manifestation. If I am conscious that love in me is the capacity to love, then, in case I love somebody and it is not reciprocated, it comes back to me and strengthens me. On the other hand, if I am not conscious of love as the capacity to love, then in the face of a failure, I am broken. When love is understood as an inextinguishable power or capacity, then it becomes felicity or *ānanda*. *Ānanda* does not depend on external things, it does not depend on others reciprocating it. It is our inner disposition and so it depends on itself, if it depends on anything.

When we came into this world we came alone with this capacity to love. It is comparable to a camera's capacity to take photos. A camera, so long as it is conscious of its capacity to take photos, never feels lonely and is not at all anxious to keep to itself the photos it has taken in the past, nor is it nostalgic of the photos it may take in the future. All that it *knows* is that the moment anything comes before it, it makes a replica of it. Love and creativity are involved in this act of the camera that perpetuates a memory: Love because it integrates with the personal object, creativity because it is capable of perpetuating that love and giving others a specimen.

Let us not, then, forget that we came alone into this world with this 'apparatus' of love that can take photos of a million friends. If we insist on keeping to ourselves the photos we have taken, we are affirming on the material plane the capacity to take photos, and thus we are cutting ourselves away from our capacity. It is physically impossible to keep around us our friends. And even when we have all of them around us, if we do not *live* the love that has brought them to us, then again we will feel lonely in the midst of a crowd of friends. For what makes it possible for the friends to live in us, and for us to live in them is this centrifugal and centripetal force of love, which is a spiritual exchange. When I have this force in my heart, I have all the friends—whether of New York or Delhi—in my heart. I cannot feel lonely for I know that the physical presence of friends is not a condition *sine qua non* to this force, it is a result.

From the above we can conclude that rushing to a friend when we feel lonely, is only a symptom and not the disease. The disease is deeper; it is the incapacity *to love* that manifests as a research *to be loved.* We seek a certitude in being loved. We forget that without loving, we cannot ask to be loved. It is a search for love on the aggressive plane, the vindictive plane, on the material plane which will not remedy our solitude. We should try to reform this tendency by the thought that 'my friend is in my heart: why should I rush to see him. If I commune with him through love, he will send me wave-lengths of love which my inner radio of love can catch'. But when this rushing tendency calms down and dies away, we can go and see him. Thus we have recreated him spiritually in our heart, and thus merited him and his love. The material presence then becomes secondary and not primary and at that moment meeting him will not make of us a slave of his physical presence.

When we feel lonely we switch on the radio, or television, we go to the cinema or we telephone to a friend or visit him. In short, we seek company. In witnessing the cinema or a piece of theatre, we find a company that is creative. Evidently an understanding friend with whom we can talk and discuss gives us more of the creative and loving company we need than anything else.

The recreations of our day do not awaken in us the creative element; we remain passive spectators. When witnessing a cinema, a theatrical piece or another spectacle, it must be possible for us to awaken something aesthetically 'new' in us so that this *elan* can be utilized to get over fixed ideas, even the fixed idea of our loneliness. It is only creativity inspired by love that can awaken a new interest in life and thus banish all loneliness. Even reading a book can be made creative. I remember the words of Gibbon, the great English historian of the 19th century, about how he used to read a new book. On seeing the title, before opening the book, he used to note down in a general way how he would have treated the subject and after having noted his points, he would begin to read the book and compare where the author of the book had got his plus and minus points in regard to his own estimate. Evidently such a method cannot apply to novels or romances or detective novels.

Every act of aesthetic appreciation is a new birth, not to speak of aesthetic creation which is evidently the birth of a new value. Even when we appreciate a good concert, something new is being born in us. We must be able to utilize this new birth to rejuvenate our being and to get over our loneliness *not only* of the moment, but to make it serve as the source of our fundamental love of life and creativity. To be passive spectators of art cannot give us this result of awakening love of life and love of creativity.

Man has need of love and creativity. His nature hungers for them. When he is denied this food, he loses hope in life, he becomes anguished. He thinks he is all alone to 'fight with life'. Life is not something to fight with, life is to be loved. When we lack this love of life, this interest for life, we feel lonely and naturally anguished or afraid. Diversions, recreations, artistic enjoyments can only create an atmosphere wherein this love of life can thrive and flourish. They cannot *create* it, they cannot pull it out of man's heart. Even as material conditions cannot give us happiness, but can only create a condition in which happiness can dawn, so also, recreations can prepare the stage only, they cannot be the actors on the stage.

The impersonal lives we are constrained to lead is a factor that deprives life of interest. Neighbours do not know each other; we think we should not know each other; it is not considered good manners. Are we not pushing our discretion, our sense of not intruding on the privacy of others too far, are we not making a fetish of this impersonal aspect? And naturally this becomes a barrier to our instinct of love. We manifest more love to an animal that passes by or to a cat sitting on the wall than to a person whom we come across and still we say, we want to respect his individuality, to respect his moods.

Then again, the man of today is too self-sufficient. He has everything he wants. Self-sufficiency in everyway is a cult with him. This self-sufficiency which feeds pride, arrogance, and isolationism is just the caricature of the spiritual self-sufficiency we spoke of at the beginning. The self-sufficiency of the saint is a certitude of having all in him and not lacking in anything. On the contrary this self-sufficiency is retreating into ones's own shell and closing the door against all outside influence. It is self-conceit and not self-sufficiency. He closes himself up with this self-sufficiency—'I have no need of anybody' and then he feels lonely. Suppose a child quarrels with the mother and thinks it can live alone and closes itself up in its room with an angry independent face. After a few hours it will realize and begin to mourn that it is lonely. Modern man is comparable to this child who has pushed its independence to the extreme with a vengeance and then realizes that it is alone. Independence is really speaking inter-dependence. Our incapacity to accommodate with other's views, also pushes us into loneliness. If I cannot appreciate another's views, I can at least try to understand them and in this trial to understand try to keep a dynamic attitude of 'perhaps he has his own reasons for acting like this' and not close the door of understanding. When we think 'perhaps he has his own reasons', we do not feel isolated from him, we continue to keep company with him mentally and spiritually. Exaggerated ideas of our 'right' and thus pride and self-sufficiency—push us into isolation from others, push us into loneliness. In those moments we may be materially self-sufficient, but never so spiritually, as this self-sufficiency is built on a division between me and my neighbour and not on unity.

Man must love his essence, which comprises what he is and what he is not, or what appears to be he is not. Then he will know how to love his neighbour who is in a sense what he is not or holds a different view. The neighbour is not essentially hostile, he is the other pole of his essence—what for the moment he appears to be not. In emphasizing the Christian virtue 'love thy neighbour as thyself' we often lose sight of the fact that we have to love our real essence first, we have to love ourselves, before we can canalize that love to our neighbour. We have to love God in us first before we can see and love the God in others.

God is man's eternal companion and friend; man is God's other half. This idea we find celebrated in Vedānta in the concept of *Nara-Nārāyaṇa*. *Nara* means man and *Nārāyaṇa* means God. Viṣṇu, the supreme God is represented as *Nara-Nārāyaṇa*, that is half man and half God. In fact that is the idea of the divine incarnation. So God is never separated from society. To please God we have to please man. This idea is put very powerfully by Vivekananda. He says: Though God is manifest everywhere he is manifest in the fullest form in man. Man is the Taj-mahal of God whereas other constructions are lesser manifestations of God. Why go to worship God in temples and churches when he is next-door to you? This proximity of God's presence in man's form is a powerful idea by which we can chase away all our loneliness. Let us serve man seeing God in him, seeing man as God's half, seeing the other half as ourselves.

To sum up: I said that the anguish of loneliness results from the eclipse of the unique, essential spiritual loneliness, with which we came into this world and which is our treasure.

The Spirit is lonely because it is unique and the Spirit carries with it an unquenchable capacity to love and to create, to take photographs and immortalize a million friends and dear things of life. To think of this capacity is not to think of friends in their physical presence. To think of friends in physical form is to indent for the anguish of loneliness; to think of our capacity to love is to merit the loneliness of the saint and the mystic who are always in spiritual company of dear ones, the faithful. I also said that we should not make a caricature of this self-sufficiency and get drunk with pride and close ourselves in isolationism. God's manifestation as *Nara-Nārāyaṇa*, man and god in one, thus carrying society in his heart is the striking example for us to share our heart and mind with the 'other', with the neighbour, or in other words, not to feel isolated from the neighbour who is God's other half and hence our other half too.

To isolate him from us or to isolate ourselves from him is to divide ourselves and thus fall into loneliness. This is to go against nature's design. Unity is nature's design and unity is the mystic's loneliness which is Vedānta's remedy for our loneliness.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Professor P. S. Naidu, M.A., of Allahabad, is one of our oldest contributors, with whose learned articles our readers are well acquainted. In his article published this month, he has beautifully presented 'The Indian Image of the Ideal Guru', and has shown how Swami Vivekananda conformed to this ideal image. The article was actually meant for the Vivekananda Birth Centenary issue, but we are sorry it could not be included in that number as it reached us very late.

In this issue, we publish the second instalment of the article by Dr. R. Balasubrahmanian, M.A., Ph.D., of Annamalai University. Here he makes further examination of some more views about the place of *karma* in the Advaitic scheme of discipline. This learned treatise will be completed with another instalment in our next issue.

Hasidism is one of the intensely spiritual movements in Judaism. Mr. Asher Block, the Rabbi of the Synagogue at Great Neck, New York, has kindly sent us an article on the movement. We hope our readers will be happy to find the liberal principles on which this movement is based and the broad outlook that it urges its followers to develop.

Professor S. N. Qanungo, M.A., of Christian College, Lucknow, in his documented article 'Hindu States and the Muslim Subjects' shows with historical evidences what actually were the economic, political, and social conditions of the Muslim subjects under Hindu rulers, specially in Deccan, in medieval India. The article is interesting readng and provides valuable informations.

Dr. K. C. Varadachari, M.A., Ph.D., of Tirupati, while analysing the 'levels of experience with regard to art, ethics, and philosophy,' in his 'Aesthetic Approach to Reality', says that the four dimensions or extensions of consciousness gradually reveal the trueness of aesthetics, culminating in the identity-awareness—'the awareness of beauty in all things without exception'.

Swami Nityabodhananda of our Geneva centre is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order.

His article 'Our Loneliness—Can Vedānta Remedy It?' is the report of a talk he gave sometime back. He says that the sense of 'loneliness' which has become a disease with many today, can be remedied if the feeling of unity is developed within oneself, and in this process the teachings of Vedānta can be of immense help.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

WHAT RELIGION IS (In The Words of Swami Vivekananda). Edited By John Yale. *Published by Phoenix House Ltd., London. 1962. Pages xxv+ 224. Price 30 shillings.*

At present, the *Complete Works by Swami Vivekananda* comprise eight volumes of 450 pages each. Various portions of these have appeared in smaller books in different languages. A few are on specified topics and some are selections of general interest. The versatile genius of the Swami, through his innumerable lectures, letters, and dialogues has dealt with a variety of subjects related to the life and progress of people both in the East and the West. Of these subjects, some are of particular relevancy to the people of India and some to the people of Europe and America, and some again, to humanity at large. To make a compact selection, therefore, from this variegated material, which will at once be representative of the Swami's thought and also be of special interest to Western people is a job that defies complete satisfaction. And yet, this and a little more is the objective of the editor. He submits that the present volume has been designed to meet the need for 'a book of agreeable size and modest price, representative of Swami's teachings published in the West for Western people; and, if possible, the material should be arranged so that a reader, devoid of previous knowledge of the subject, may follow the thread of Vivekananda's thought in a systematic way'.

Whether in India or elsewhere, the burden of Swami Vivekananda's thought can be summed up in his own significant words: 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work or worship or psychic control or philosophy—by one or more or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion.' Everything else he had preached was to subserve this end—to remove the handicaps, of whatever type they be, and prepare man for this freedom. 'My message can be stated in a few words', says the Swami, 'to bring out the divine in man and to enable him to manifest it in every action of his.'

The divinity of the human soul, the methods and means for its manifestation, and the inspiring examples of the saints and sages in this direction cover, in short, the fundamentals of religion. If this is true—and it appears to be true according to the Swami himself—then, the present volume serves to a large extent the objective the editor has in mind, not only in the representative selection and systematic arrangement of the material but also in all other respects.

The masterly introduction by Christopher Isherwood, rich in chosen biographic details of the Swami's life as Vivekananda in America and as Narendra Nath at the feet of the divine Master, will be highly appreciated, particularly by new-comers to Vivekananda. This, undoubtedly, adds to the value of the book.

The neat printing in good paper and the beautiful cover and convenient size make the book all the more attractive. As intended by the devoted editor, it is indeed a fitting 'tribute to the memory and work of Swami Vivekananda' on the occasion of his birth centenary.

S. P.

THE INSPIRING PRECEPTS FROM THE DIVINE PEN OF SRI SRI THAKUR HARANATH. By A. Ramakrishna Sastri. *Published by K. Ramachandra Rao, Moberlipeta, Amalapuram, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh. 1962. Pages 235. Price Rs. 2.*

Thakur Haranath was a saint with country-wide following. He was no philosopher and founded no sect. But his message of Divine Love continues to grip the hearts of all with whom he came into contact directly or indirectly. The present compilation from his notes, letters and other writings classified and arranged under suitable heads by Sri Sastri, a devout follower of the Thakur, offers his teaching of Love to everyone whatever be his walk of life.

In the course of a moving Introduction, the writer gives us a glimpse into the remarkable life of the saint and describes at length the climactic experience of death and resurrection underwent by the Thakur in the midst of a journey in Kashmir. This took place in April 1896 and marked a total transformation in his life. It is believed that he was thereafter an embodiment of Śrī Caitanya emanation and, indeed, he described himself as such on several occasions.

His teaching was simple. No penance, no ritual, no pilgrimages but only *love*. Love for God within and for God without, manifest in all the orders of creation. To awaken this love he enjoined *nāma-japa*. He describes how in the state of consciousness brought about by this Love he could see the very trees sucking sap from the earth through their roots. Divine Love brings together the whole of creation in one bosom. Each page of this book is a commentary on this truth.

Sri M. P. Pandit

THE BHAGAVAD GITĀ. Edited by Nataraja Guru. *Published by Asia Publishing House, Bombay. Pages 763+xvi. Price Rs. 32.*

This big volume, 'the culmination of over thirty years of study, reflection, and practical teaching', is a welcome addition to the vast literature on the *Gītā*. Head of the Narayana Gurukula and himself a man of letters, the editor has added a learned introduction to his commentary. His critical survey of the *Gītā* literature (Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's name is sadly missing among the galaxy of writers who enriched this literature), commencing from the orthodox commentaries down to the various modern interpretations of its message (for instance, Acharya Vinoba Bhave's *Gītā-Pravacana*) will give the modern Western reader, for whom the book is obviously meant, food for thought. The editor's masterly analysis of the eighteen chapters, and specially the structure of the complicated ones among the seven hundred and forty-five verses of the *Gītā*, is remarkable. In the course of his introductory dissertation he says: 'Professor O. Lacombe of Paris comes nearest to our own standpoint in the present work when he writes: "The *Bhagavad Gītā* appears to us at once as a literary expression of the most ancient form of *ekāntika dharma* and also as being the least particularized and the least sectarian; it does not intend to be a book of any determinate school but of all orthodox schools. Round the personality of Kṛṣṇa it sounds a recall of all traditional forces for a new life impetus and this is what explains its universal value in Hinduism"' (p. 11). The editor rightly observes that 'we can discover that the discussion and revaluation of the *Gītā* is round the topic of what constitutes proper renunciation'. In support, he quotes Sri Ramakrishna: 'As Ramakrishna, the saint of Bengal, is said to have put it, the *Gītā* teaches *tyāga* (relinquishment), and fast repetition of the word *Gītā* (*gītāgītāgītā*...), results in the reversed syllabic formation of the word *tyāgī* or *tāgī*—as near as is natural to the pronunciation by a Bengali' (p. 29-30). He ably clears some of the misconceptions with regard to the so-called contradictions (with particular reference to *ahiṁsā*) in the *Gītā* (p. 491 ff.). The editor takes great pains to show how the *Gītā* excels in successfully employing the subtle technique of dialectics from beginning to end. He concludes his introduction, saying: 'The *Gītā* is a wisdom dialogue of a non-religious and non-obligatory, contemplative and philosophical order.'

Nataraja Guru mainly bases his commentary on Monism (Advaitavāda) advocated by the great Śankarācārya, as distinguished from Qualified Monism (Viśiṣṭādvaita-vāda) and Dualism (Dvaita-vāda) advocated by Śrī Rāmānujācārya and Śrī Madhvācārya respectively. He refers to their basic differences specially over the issue of Karma (p. 184-5), *bhakti* (p. 525-6), and nature of the Absolute *vis-a-vis* Śrī Kṛṣṇa (p. 593-4), and supports Śaṅkara. Of course, he does not go the whole hog. He goes as far as he can without deviating an inch from the cult of his *guru*: One caste, one religion, one God. His views on caste are coloured accordingly (p. 229 ff. and 678 ff.). The same reason prompts him to look askance at orthodoxy, Vedic rituals or any form of worship, as well as on the personal god (p. 188, 513). And he is particularly cross with those who uphold the doctrine of *Gītā* theism. Few will agree with his criticism of Dr. Radhakishnan while dealing with Chapters XII and XVIII (p. 526, 705). It is not that he does not try to be accommodating. But his views on *brahmacarya* (p. 294) or on the spiritual life of a man of easy virtues (p. 563) do not quite conform to the view upheld by the great seers.

Surely, one should not be too rigid. But it is desirable that one should keep aloof from those prejudices which, in one's view, distort the judgement of others (cf. p. 176). Of course, the commentator does not fail to recognize the fact that 'the method of the *Gītā* is never to condemn a lower form of ritual worship or devotion in opposition to the highest form recommended, but always to treat them hand in hand'. Nevertheless, he should have been more explicit.

There is absolutely no question of bypassing the lower forms. We have to transcend them. Swami Vivekananda is very clear on this point. 'You find in the *Gītā*', he says, 'there is no torturing....Even the *karma-kāṇḍa* is taken up, and it is shown that, although it cannot give salvation direct, but only indirectly, yet that is also valid; images are valid indirectly. ... Religions and sects are not the work of hypocrites and wicked people, who invented all these to get a little money, as some of our modern men want to think. ... They are the outcome of the necessity of the human soul. They are all here to satisfy the hankering and thirst of different classes of human minds, and you need not preach against them. The day when the necessity will cease, they will vanish along with the cessation of that necessity' (*Complete Works, Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. III p. 261-62). 'Slowly and gradually the human soul rises up and up, step after step, from the gross to the fine, from the fine to the finer, until it reaches the Absolute, the goal. That is what is in the *Gītā*' (*Ibid.* p. 261). That way lies real synthesis of the warring views on the *Gītā*. However, considering the nature of the task, the editor's endeavour in assessing and presenting the thoughts on the *Gītā* in terms acceptable to the modern mind may be said to be highly successful.

The publishers, noted for their high standard, should be congratulated for the nice printing and get-up of the book.

SWAMI SATYAGHANANANDA

ŚRĪ LALITĀ SAHASRANĀMAM. WITH INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY. BY DR. CHAGANTY SURYANARAYANA MURTY. *Published by Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras-17. 1962. Pages 216. Price Rs. 6.*

The Divine Mother Śrī Lalitāmbikā, also called Rājarājesvarī, Tripurāsundarī, etc. is the presiding Deity of the cult of Śrī Vidyā or Brahmavidyā, which is a practical course of *sādhanā* for the realization of the highest truths of the Vedānta. The great Ācārya Śaṅkara himself established Her worship in the several monasteries started by him. *Śrī Lalitā Sahasranāma* which occurs in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* is an exquisite *stotra* in Her praise, and containing as it does the essence of the wisdom of the Āgamas, the Tantras and the Upaniṣads, the presents a grand synthesis of the various paths of *sādhanā* —the *bhakti-yoga, rāja-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga*. To all votaries of the Mother, the *stotra* has long been an important aid to *sādhanā*.

The book under review is a simple commentary on the *stotra*, written in English, the *stotra* itself being given in Devanāgarī script, at the end of the book. The author has explained briefly, but lucidly, the thousand names in the *stotra*, aptly quoting from the Upaniṣads and other scriptures wherever necessary. The Introduction deals with Devī-worship, its development from early times, its philosophy and modes of *sādhanā*. There is also a Preface in which the author has tried to show how modern scientific thought is approximating to Upaniṣadic philosophy.

The get-up is good, but there are quite a large number of printing mistakes not all of which have been corrected in the Errata.

SWAMI SANDHYANANDA

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA PATNA

REPORT FOR 1961-62

The Ashrama conducted the following activities during the year:

Religious Activities: Classes were regularly held inside and outside the Ashrama on Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature, *Śrīmad Bhāgavata, Yogavāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa*, and *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*. Regular worship was conducted in the shrine and important festivals such as the *Durgā-pūjā* etc. and the birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda, and other great prophets were celebrated.

Educational and Cultural Activities: (i) *The Adbhutananda U. P. School*: This school imparts free education to poor boys. At the end of the year, there were 263 students on the roll. (ii) *The Students' Home*: At the end of the year, the Students' Home had 26 students, of whom 16 were full free, four part-paying, and six paying.

The Turiyananda Library and Free Reading Room: The total number of books in the library in March 1962 was 6,360 of which seven were additions. The reading room received six dailies and 75 periodicals. The total number of books issued were 9,509.

Medical Activities: (i) The Bhuvaneshwar Homoeopathic Charitable Dispensary treated 59,422 patients, of whom 7,258 were new cases; (ii) In the Allopathic Charitable Dispensary, the total number of patients treated was 54,469, of which 8,547 were new cases.

Relief: Last year when devastating floods swept over Monghyr district in Bihar, the Ashrama organized relief at Barhaiya. The relief workers visited 40 affected villages and distributed blankets and clothing to 1,326 families.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SINGAPORE

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1961

The following were the activities of this centre for the year under review:

Library and Reading Room: The library contained 4,403 books. Number of books issued: 895; Number of persons who made use of the library and reading room: 2,190; Number of periodicals in the reading room: 62; newspapers: 6.

Cultural Activities: Weekly religious classes were held by the Swamis and the President delivered twenty-one lectures in Singapore and Malaya.

Celebrations: Birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, Swami Vivekananda, and other prophets and great religious teachers were observed with due solemnity.

Education Activities: The Sarada Devi Tamil School was run in the mornings and Vivekananda Tamil School in the evenings at the same premises. In the former, the enrolment was 150 girls and in the latter, 103 boys and 25 girls. In the Secondary School Entrance examination the students secured 81% passes.

Night Class for Adults: There were two classes, one in English and the other in Tamil, with a total enrolment of 48 pupils.

Boys' Home: There were 55 inmates in the Home, their ages ranging from 6 to 17 years. A monastic member is in charge of imparting moral and religious instruction.

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

Vol. LXVIII DECEMBER 1963 No. 12

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

Barisal Math, 28th November 1935

Several devotees came early in the morning to see Swami Vijnanananda. He was speaking about Sri Ramakrishna. One of the visitors asked whether anyone had seen the Master after his passing away. Maharaj firmly said: 'Oh yes; some have seen him, certainly.' A devotee asked about the diversity of God's creation. Maharaj said: 'How can I say anything about that? I am not God, but one of His slaves only.' Another devotee asked: 'Is it absolutely essential for a spiritual aspirant to get initiated?'

Maharaj: Yes, that is so.

Devotee: If after initiation one does not act according to the *Guru*-given instructions?

Maharaj: Suppose a person takes a thing. He may not use it; however, he can do so whenever he wishes. But another person cannot at all use it for the reason that he does not have the thing, even if he so wishes.

Devotee: Is it right to call worship of images of gods and goddesses as 'idol' worship?

Maharaj: There is no gain whatever by worshipping with idea of 'idol'. Don't worship an idol as an 'idol'. It is very bad. Worship should be done with the idea that you are worshipping God, that He is in the idol and that the idol only symbolizes Him. The image is not God, but God is in the image.

In the evening many of the college professors and a large number of devotees came. Maharaj started talking on Swamiji, his devotion, faith, benevolence, supernatural experiences, etc. He was speaking like one inspired and the visitors listened to him spellbound. Afterwards he said: 'I did not go to Swamiji very often. One day he called me a little while before evening. I said I was going to sit for meditation. Hearing it he laughed and said: "How are you going to meditate? Are you sure you will not run short of water?"' The listeners not knowing the allusion, Maharaj told them Swamiji's funny story on meditation. They were all at first very much amused to hear it and then seemed to examine their own hearts. The moral behind the story made a deep impression on the listeners.

Barisal Math, 2nd December 1935

At about 4 p.m. Swami Vijnanananda came to Brajmohan College where he sat on the tennis ground, surrounded by a few professors and students. As he did not like crowds, the college classes had been dissolved earlier. The students of the hostel having expressed their desire to listen to Maharaj's words, he told them briefly to keep their body and mind healthy, to be pure in life, and to adhere steadfastly to truth to the best of their ability.

To a question as to how peace of mind could be attained, Vijnananandaji said: 'Chant the name of God and then only you will have peace of mind.'

On being asked if it was good to practise *prāṇāyāma* (breath control), Maharaj said: 'It should not be overdone. It should be kept within the 4-16-8 or 8-32-16 counts. At one time I, too, practised *prāṇāyāma*. I used to control my breath and remain still for about an hour. But I found the brain would get heated as a result. *Japa* and meditation also must be practised only as much as they can be done comfortably without too much strain. Well, I have seen enough of life and now I have made the Master and the Holy Mother my sole refuge. And my only desire now is to spend the rest of my life under their sheltering wings.'

Swami Vijnanananda's spiritual life made such a deep impression on the devotees of Barisal that they wanted him to prolong his stay there by a few days. But he found himself unable to agree and wanted to leave on the day fixed earlier. Reminded of an incident in this connection he said laughingly: 'Once Gangadhar Maharaj, who was to leave for Murshidabad, was requested by Rakhal Maharaj to extend his stay at the Belur Math. But the former was determined to go. So a boat was hired, and at night Gangadhar Maharaj, after taking leave of all the people present, got into it and soon fell asleep. The boatman, however, had previously been instructed by Rakhal Maharaj to ply the oars keeping the vessel anchored. And when Gangadhar Maharaj woke up in the morning, he found the boat moored at the Math ghat, and Rakhal Maharaj smilingly looking on from the embankment!'

Belur Math, 20th December 1936

A devotee came to Vijnananandaji and asked: 'What is the effect of making *prāṇāyāma*?'

Maharaj: The heart is purified.

Devotee: And what does that lead to?

Maharaj: It leads to God-realization. And that is the great finale, the climax, the ultimate fulfilment.

Rangoon Sevashrama, December 1936

In December 1936, Swami Vijnanananda went to Rangoon at the invitation of the Sevashrama there. The Master had appeared in his dream and wanted him to go. His stay at Rangoon was short, but everyone felt that as a child of Eternal Bliss, the Swami had inherited a fund of divine joy which he freely distributed among all and sundry. He stayed there for only seven days but the hallowed memory of those few days remained in the hearts of people there as a cherished treasure.

From Belur Math Vijnan Maharaj started on the 6th December for Rangoon. On the wide bosom of the blue ocean he was very happy and like a child asked his companions all sorts of questions about the boat, the sea, etc. The attendant monks had a very pleasant time in his company. The sunrise, the sunset and everything was so charming from the vast sea but the most gratifying of all was the company of this holy soul.

On the third day after noon, as soon as the ship entered Rangoon harbour, the monks of the Sevashrama came to the ship in a motor-launch to receive him with honour. Maharaj was very pleased to meet them, and when they had finished their formal greetings, he in a light mood said humorously: 'How did you manage to come here? We are still in the mid-river. Won't you allow me to alight?'

Quick came the reply from the head of the Sevashrama: 'What do you mean, Maharaj! How many distinguished people have come to formally welcome you!' He was told that, as he was shy of crowds, separate arrangements had been made for his disembarkation. Then addressing the head of the Sevashrama, Maharaj said in fun: 'Look, brother, I have not taken anything of this food which these people (attendant *sādhus*) brought with them for me. It is only they who have expended your money. So please do not blame me!' There was hearty laughter among the assembled monks. Such profound solemnity blended with a keen sense of humour was a marked characteristic of Swami Vijnanananda's personality.

Slowly the ship came to the wharf and he was received with flowers and garlands by the big gathering of monks and devotees. Newspapers had already announced the time of his arrival, as a result of which a large number of men and women belonging to different faiths and walks of life had come to see him. An attractive motor car had been kept ready to take him to the Sevashrama. On seeing it Maharaj said like a child: 'A fine car indeed. I shall have no discomfort whatsoever. And the people here are also so good.' In a few minutes the car reached the Sevashrama and stopped in front of the room where he was to stay. Pleased with the room, he said: 'It is really a beautiful room, and they have arranged everything attractively.' One of the monks said that it was a modest service of the Rangoon Sevashrama to the Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, to which Maharaj exclaimed: 'Oh no, I am not a person of any importance. The people here are all very good. Didn't you see at the pier even the Europeans doffing their hats before me in greeting? After all, brother, we are monks; yet they treat us so warmly because they are all really good people. Isn't it so?'

Over a hundred people had spiritual rebirth in getting initiation from him. After initiation he spoke to every devotee about prayer: 'You should pray to the Master at least twice every day (morning and evening) saying, "Lord, you are my sole refuge. Hold my hand and guide me along the right path. I beg of you, on the last day of my life when darkness encompasses me, to lift me up. Pray, do not forget me then."'

While Maharaj uttered this prayer, he would be so much carried away by his emotion that people hearing his piteous voice, found it hard to restrain their tears. In Rangoon no one who asked for initiation from him was refused. He granted his favours to all, irrespective of caste and creed.

With regard to the significance of initiation he said: 'Do you know what it means to me? It takes the devotees and offers them at the feet of the Master.'

During his stay in Rangoon, Vijnan Maharaj went to Pegu to see the great reclining statue of Buddha. Pegu is 45 miles from Rangoon; and after seeing the image, all were getting ready to leave but Maharaj stood motionless in absorption in front of the huge image. His companions were amazed to see his inward mood. After a long time, he became normal and then got into the car. But that mood seized him again. Who knows in what supernormal region his mind was sauntering then!

From there he was taken to see another old Buddhist temple but he did not alight from the car. His companions went to see it, and on their return found him sitting quiet and motionless, a beatific smile irradiating his countenance.

The car was now on its way to Rangoon town, but the mind of Vijnan Maharaj wandering in some transcendental region was detached from his surroundings. After a long silence he came to himself and in reply to the earnest questions of his companions said: 'The Lord Buddha was gracious enough to reveal Himself to me. I found the reclining figure to be pulsating with life and shining with radiant beauty.' Telling only this much, he became silent again.

In the evening of the 12th December, with regard to the news about the abdication of King Edward VIII, Swami Vijnanananda said: 'See how for a woman he has discarded empire, wealth, position, and everything. So a woman is of greater importance than an empire. And further far, far away is God. But who gives up anything for God who is the highest in the world? Once you realize Him, there is nothing else left to strive for, although it is very difficult to realize Him. Still this sacrifice on the part of the King should command our admiration. Any kind of renunciation is good: it signifies non-attachment and strength of mind. Today he has given up his kingdom, and tomorrow he may give up the woman also.'

Then pointing to a *brahmacārin* he said: 'It is a very good thing that these young boys have left home and everything for the sake of God. If, of course, owing to their bad luck they fail to realize Him, it is a different matter altogether. But at least they have renounced everything for Him and that is a great thing. There is nothing like renunciation.'

A devotee: But, sir, that a king has renounced everything for a mere woman seems rather strange.

Maharaj: That is true. But if you turn away from the object which motivated his renunciation, and take the act of renunciation itself, you must give him due credit for it. When the idea of renunciation is there, he may in time, if he so wishes, renounce everything else. Without renunciation you cannot achieve anything in the sphere of religion. People speak of King Janaka. Our Master used to say that we hear of one Janaka only. What spiritual austerities he must have undergone in his previous births! Everyone cannot be a King Janaka. So renunciation is necessary. ... You have got to be very punctilious in doing your duty. Work has to be done always with a sense of duty, but without an eye for the results. It is said that the idle man's brain is the devil's workshop. Your breathing and respiration, as you are sitting here, is also work. And if at the same time you can go on uttering the name of God, it helps a good deal.

After this Maharaj narrated how the hunter Ratnākara became Vālmīki, how Tulasīdāsa had a vision of Mahāvīra and then of Śrī Rāmacandra, and so on.

On the 13th December, to a number of monks and devotees who had gathered, Maharaj said: 'Do you know where one should meditate? Our Master used to say it should be done in the heart, in secluded corner, and in the forest. What did he mean by "forest"?'

A monk: It means a jungle.

Maharaj: No, my dear. It refers to your mind where the passions dominate. Such a mind is like a forest. You have to purge your mind of all these passions, make it pure and holy, and then invoke God there.

Monk: Then what is the idea of mentioning mind and forest separately?

Maharaj: It is not without significance. Mind here means the heart. You have to think that your Deity whom you adore lives inside the heart. You have to remember God and call on Him constantly, so that at the time you leave this world He may occupy your thoughts. Otherwise, if at that time you think of horses and elephants, you will be reborn in the form of these animals, like King Bharata who was born as a deer (He had a pet fawn and while dying, he was thinking of it). Death is a painful thing because from birth to death life throbs in this body. Therefore one gets so much attached to this body that it becomes very painful when one has to give it up. You can see that if you possess a thing even for a few days you get attached to it; and hence it is no wonder that one should feel so painful to give up this body which one has cherished from birth.

On the 14th December a number of visitors arrived to listen to Vijnan Maharaj whose presence had created a deeply pervasive spiritual atmosphere. They listened to him with rapt attention. Maharaj said: 'Every day you should regularly practise meditation. That helps you to concentrate your mind. And you should, as far as possible, keep yourself mentally aloof. God who creates, preserves, and destroys this universe is all alone, because He is One. He is visible to very few people, though He is the most Supreme of all things. The greater a person is the more does he keep himself concealed and secluded. But we are so constituted that we only want to advertise ourselves; that is not right. One should try to help others as far as possible, but without beating one's drum. For the rest of the time, one should be all by oneself. In this way concentration of mind will be gradually achieved.'

A devotee: The mind, Maharaj, refuses to fix itself on the object of meditation, and this gives rise to an acute feeling of despair. What is the remedy for it?

Maharaj: That need not worry you at all. You should go on telling your beads morning and evening even though the mind wanders. You should never give it up. And there is no reason to despair either. In time everything will come out all right. Your mind may not settle always on your object of worship, but it must get settled for some time at least, may be once in fifteen minutes? That should be enough. Meditation or no meditation, you should never give up your practice. *Japa* will consummate in meditation and meditation will lead to ecstasy. In deep meditation, one is blessed with supernatural visions.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF A NATION

[EDITORIAL]

It has been said: 'The philosophy of a nation is important, for it foreshadows a nation's fate'. Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-saint of modern India, knew the truth of this saying and, therefore, while painting the philosophy of our Indian nation in the brightest colour possible and asking us never to forget it, has pointed out the wrong conception we made about it, the degradation we brought in it and the false ideologies we associated with it. He knew that if this philosophy is kept vigorous, pure, and vital, the national life, in spite of temporary sufferings and setbacks, can never really die out.

What, it may be asked, does the philosophy of a nation mean? It is the keynote of the intricate music of the life of a nation, expressing itself in a variety of forms and symphonies. 'Each nation', as Swamiji has said, 'has its own peculiarity and individuality, with which it is born. Each represents, as it were, one peculiar note in the harmony of nations; and this is its very life, its vitality. In it is the backbone, the foundation, the bed-rock of the national life. In one nation political power is its vitality, as in England. Artistic life in another, and so on. I have seen that I cannot preach religion to Americans without showing them its practical effect on social life. I could not preach religion in England without showing the wonderful political changes the Vedānta would bring. ...' What then is the philosophy of our nation? Answering this question, Swamiji says: 'Here in this blessed land the foundation, the backbone, the life centre is religion and religion alone. In India religious life forms the centre, the keynote of the whole music of national life.' He also knew that 'when the life-blood is strong and pure, no disease germ can live in that body. Our life-blood is spirituality. If it flows clear, if it flows strong and pure and vigorous, everything is right; political, social, any other material defects, even the poverty of the land, will all be cured if that blood is pure.' And it was this task—to make his countrymen understand that this 'life-blood' must be kept flowing vigorous and pure—which the Swami took upon himself and as such, he has touched the philosophy of our nation at its best chords and has given it a new vitality, a re-orientated practicality and a firmer rational foundation. It has been made suited to answer the needs of the modern times and to face the problems of present-day life squarely.

II

From time immemorial, before our written history started taking down notes for its record, India had started its magnificent researches in the realm of spirit and, through thick and thin, has stuck to it with more or less enthusiasm. Indian national life, while giving due importance to the other vocations of life at their proper places, has pursued the way of a continuous struggle of spiritual seeking and finding. Reading the history of this struggle in India, Swami Vivekananda said, 'I stand in awe before the unbroken procession of scores of shining centuries, with here and there a dim link in the chain, only to flare up with added brilliance in the next; and there she is walking with her own majestic steps—my motherland—to fulfil her glorious destiny, which no power on earth or in heaven can check—the regeneration of man the brute into man the God'.

This search after and manifestation of divinity is the basic principle of the national philosophy of India. But with the passage of time, just as all things lose their original vigour and change shape and nature, this philosophy also underwent change because it fell in the hands of such persons who had neither the requisite capacity to conceive of the true import of the high spiritual ideal nor the necessary power to live up to it. And the result was disastrous. It is the common reading of the history that such things happen and it is for this only that new thoughts and movements become necessary to replace not only the outdated, worn out, and wrongly conceived ideologies, social customs and patterns of life, but also to re-orient and re-establish the old good and noble ideologies to their pristine glory, making them answer to the needs of the times and ridding them of the undesirable associations brought about them by their unscrupulous and unworthy custodians. It is for this readjustment that even *avatāras* have to come from time to time. Why is it that the *dharma* established by an *avatāra* does not last for all times? Is it the weakness of the *avatāras* that they establish a religion without the foresight necessary for its everlasting continuation? Why should vice prevail over virtue and why should God come into being in every age for the protection of the good and for the establishment of *dharma*? Because such is the law of nature that all things should undergo change. Even 'good' things start corrupting the world because, in the hands of the unscrupulous, these good things do not remain good anymore.

This is what happened with us also. Though there never was the dearth here of genuinely spiritual personalities, the unwary common people fell helpless victims in the hands of some clever manipulators and religion, instead of being an aid for emancipation and progress, became the instrument of oppression and degradation. Looking at this phase of our religious transgressions, Swami Vivekananda woefully said: 'No religion on earth preaches the dignity of humanity in such a lofty strain as Hinduism, and no religion on earth treads upon the necks of the poor and the low in such a fashion as Hinduism.' But he did not blame religion for it because he knew the cause of this injustice done in the name of religion. He therefore said: 'The Lord has shown me that religion is not at fault, but it is the Pharisees and Sadducees in Hinduism, hypocrites, who invent all sorts of engines of tyranny in the shape of doctrines of *Pāramārthika* and *Vyāvahārika*.'

This leads us to an important conclusion: It is this that however high the philosophy, it must be made use of conscientiously. The guiding principle of religion, or as a matter of that any principle, should be first to understand and then to speak about or make use of it. First 'Be' and then 'Make', otherwise it will be like the case of a blind man leading the blind. But unfortunately, this was totally forgotten in India for a time—and quite a long time—and the 'philosophy of the nation', as we call it, fell into evil hands and the result was misery. Speaking about it all some sixty years ago, Swami Vivekananda said, 'The country has been slowly and slowly drowned in the ocean of *tamas* or dark ignorance. Where the most dull want to hide their stupidity by covering it with a false desire for the highest knowledge, which is beyond all activities, either physical or mental; where one, born and bred in lifelong laziness, wants to throw the veil of renunciation over his own unfitness for work; where the most diabolical try to make their cruelty appear, under the cloak of austerity, as a part of religion; where no one has an eye upon his own incapacity, but every one is ready to lay the whole blame on others; where knowledge consists only in getting some books by heart, genius consists in chewing the cud of others' thoughts, and and the highest glory consists in taking the name of the ancestors: do we require any other proof to show that the country is being day by day drowned in utter *tamas*?'

III

There is no greater danger to an individual or a society than to lose sight of the realities, of the present needs and necessities and live in the false realm of self-idealism, sticking to wrongly conceived ideologies. One must be proud of the past if it is really worth it and should always draw inspiration from such heritage of his race as would make him vigorous, strong, and confident to fight the problems that confront him at the moment. This really proves the worth of looking to the past. But only boasting of the great deeds done by one's ancestors and trying to hide one's own worthlessness in the vainglorious satisfaction of being the descendants of great ones, are sure signs of imbecility and weakness. This was the catastrophy which betook us in the past and it is still not completely over with us. We are too much idealizing the philosophy and religion but making too little efforts to improve the present with them. Philosophy, if it does not inspire us to make the supreme efforts to reach the greater heights, is no philosophy. Religion, if it does not help us to fight the battle of life successfully and again help us to transform the dross of matter in us into shining gold of spirit is no religion. Religion must give us success in this life and peace in the life hereafter. Swamiji, disgusted with the lame excuses we were making to hide our weakness and vain talks we were indulging in to justify our incapacity and backwardness, remonstrated: 'We talk foolishly against material civilization. The grapes are sour. Even taking all that foolishness for granted, in all India there are, say, a hundred thousand really spiritual men and women. Now, for the spiritualization of these, must three hundred millions be sunk in savagery and starvation? Why should they starve? How was it possible for the Hindus to have been conquered by the Mohammedans? It was due to the Hindus' ignorance of material civilization. ... Material civilization, nay even luxury, is necessary to create work for the poor. Bread! Bread! I do not believe in a God who cannot give me bread here, giving me eternal bliss in heaven! Pooh! India is to be raised, the poor are to be fed, education is to be spread, and the evil of priestcraft is to be removed. No priestcraft, no social tyranny! More bread, more opportunity for everybody! ...

'Now, this is to be brought about slowly and by only insisting on our religion, and giving liberty to society. Root up priestcraft from the old religion and you get the best religion in the world. Do you understand me? Can you make a European society with India's religion? I believe it is possible and must be.'

IV

Religion has two aspects—personal and collective. Whereas it helps a man to constantly purify and heighten his inner personality, it also helps the society to keep to proper norms and standards which reflect the goodness and greatness of the collective life. Of course, the few that are really so high spiritually that they are mad after God or religion, may not look after any collective responsibility or duty, though it is often seen that even spiritually enlightened souls feel and work for their less enlightened brethren. But all others should see that religion plays its proper role in society also. The society should be so constituted as to be able to provide facility to its members to develop themselves well with mutual help and cooperation so that the community life may be lived happily—where there should be the satisfaction of the common needs of the people and the fulfilment of their higher aspirations.

As such, though the ultimate truth is that God and mammon cannot live together, religion, when working for collective life, has got a 'secular' aspect also. Do we not find that when a prophet is born, he gives out his teachings to the world, asking people to make the realization of God the sole aim of life, but round his teachings invariably grows a new society, a new community, a new culture, a new philosophy of living? Religion in its higher aspects is bound to be individualistic. A person who seeks God and God alone will always tend to cut himself off, from each and everything we call 'worldly'; but when we look at the general aspect of religion, we take into consideration the collective life, and here religion owes an obligation to the society towards its growth, development, and establishment. Religion in order to be effective must come to the aid of the ordinary common man fighting the battle of life in the same way as to the highly spiritual *yogin* who wants to realize God. 'Religion for a long time has come to be static in India', said Swami Vivekananda. 'What we want is to make it dynamic. I want it to be brought into the life of everybody. Religion, as it always has been in the past, must enter the palaces of the kings as well as the homes of the poorest peasants in the land. Religion, the common inheritance, the universal birthright of the race must be brought free to the door of everybody'. He wanted that religion and philosophy must not only be the fad or pastime of the privileged few but must come to help one and all. 'Religion,' he said, 'to help mankind, must be ready and able to help him (man) in whatever condition he is, in servitude or in freedom, in the depths of degradation or on the heights of purity; everywhere, equally, it should be able to come to his aid. The principles of Vedānta, or the ideal of Religion, or whatever you may call it, will be fulfilled by its capacity for performing this great function.'

It was Swami Vivekananda who emancipated religion from the bondage which had been put round it by the 'Pharisees and Sadducees' and helped the philosophy of our nation rise out of the morass it had fallen into and made it virile and effective. Religion is not a system of doctrines and dogmas. It is a way of life making for peace, love, harmony, and progress. Religion must not, therefore, be divorced from life but it should be associated with it. The philosophy of religion must be a philosophy of life—helping it in all its phases and stages of development leading ultimately to the realization of Truth. Expressing this harmonious outlook of her master on life and its activities, Sister Nivedita says: 'This is the realization which makes Vivekananda the great preacher of *karma*, not as divorced from, but as expressing *jñāna* and *bhakti*. To him, the workshop, the study, the farm-yard and the field, are as true and fit scenes for the meeting of God with man as the cell of the monk or the door of the temple.

To him, there is no difference between service of man and worship of God, between manliness and faith, between true righteousness and spirituality. All his words, from one point of view, read as a commentary upon this central conviction.'

This comprehensive outlook and this dynamic spirit in every field of life were what Swami Vivekananda wanted; and we still, even after sixty years of his passing away, have not fully paid due heed to what he said. No doubt the country has undergone a vast change. The fetters of political bondage have dropped off from its body, the air of freedom has blown away the slavish mentality of looking to others for help and succour; great economic, social, and other advancements are being made, but not without a number of difficult problems requiring wise solution. Various ways and means are naturally, therefore, being taken recourse to and, in the process, numerous ideologies, new and old, are crossing our minds. We are passing through a delicate transitional period of our history and only a wise and cautious handling of the present situation will determine a bright future. It is time, therefore, that we understood well the genius of our age-old national philosophy which will tone up our individual life admitting of all the broad ways of *jñāna, karma, bhakti*, and *yoga* as the means to the attainment of *mokṣa* and, at the same time also encourage the growth and strengthening of a vigorous and successful collective national life in accordance with the principles underlying that philosophy. Let us be inspired with the high ideal of realizing the Truth, and that in this life itself, but at the same time let us not neglect the society which is the veritable 'reflection of the Great Mother'. Renunciation should and must be encouraged but not *tamas*. Let us strengthen ourselves with the glorious achievements of our great ancestors, but let us not be worthless idlers wallowing in the vainglory of our bygone days. What is needed is a dynamic spirit in every field of life—spiritual, social, and political. The whole society should be so organized that not only its members' health and life and property would be protected and improved, but that it would be able to provide facilities for higher achievements by the individuals; and at the same time it will radiate strength and beauty of its ideology even outside its own boundary. It should be, as Dr. Radhakrishnan has said the other day, 'able not only to save itself but to extend its sheltering arms even to those who, though not belonging to it, seek its help and value its ideals'.

THE PLACE OF KARMA IN THE ADVAITIC SCHEME OF DISCIPLINE

By Dr. R. Balasubrahmanian

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

VI

MANDANA'S EXPLANATION OF THE UTILITY OF KARMA, CONTEMPLATION, AND OTHER AIDS

Maṇḍana wholly sets his face against the view mentioned above. According to him, *karma* and knowledge should be said to be related as means (*upāya*) and end (*upeya*). He would suggest that the relation between them should be understood in the light of the relation between the means of valid knowledge (*pramāṇa*), the object of knowledge (*prameya*), etc. on the one hand, and the resulting knowledge on the other. For origination of knowledge, *pramāṇa* or the means of knowledge, *prameya* or the object of knowledge, etc. are indispensable. Since in their absence knowledge cannot arise, they are rightly regarded as the means to knowledge. This holds good even in the case of the knowledge of the non-dual reality. It also presupposes distinctions in the form of *pramāṇa, prameya,* etc. which are all means to it. No one denies the relation of means and end between them, even though *pramāṇa, prameya,* etc. involve duality and the resulting knowledge has non-relational, non-dual content. If the relation between them is denied on the ground that they are fundamentally opposed to each other, knowledge of the non-dual reality can never arise at all. It may be suggested that the two are not opposed to each other as they do not exist at the same time. There is temporal difference between means and end: the former precedes the latter in point of time. Though *pramāṇa, prameya,* etc. serve as the means to bring about the knowledge of the non-dual reality, they disappear as soon as the latter comes into being. Thus, since they exist at different times, they are not opposed to each other; at the same time they are related as means and end. The same explanation, according to Maṇḍana, holds good between *karma* and knowledge. *Karma,* no doubt, involves duality, and the knowledge that results is the knowledge of the non-dual reality. Nevertheless, the two are not opposed to each other, as they do not exist at the same time. When the knowledge of the non-dual reality takes place, distinctions of all kinds disappear. But *karma* which involves duality could exist before the origination of such knowledge. Hence *karma* and knowledge, says Maṇḍana, could be related as means and end, in spite of the fact that the former involves duality, while the latter has for its content the non-dual reality.[45]

How does *karma* serve as a means (*upāya*) to the realization of the Self? Maṇḍana maintains that both *karma* and meditation play a vital role in bringing about Self-realization. It should not be argued as a matter of general principle that the illusory cognition (*mithyāvabhāsa*) will disappear, wherever it may arise, as soon as the truth is known. It may be that in a few cases it disappears at the onset of right knowledge; but it may also continue due to some reason in certain cases even after the rise of right knowledge. We can take the well-known case of the illusion of direction which Maṇḍana cites in support of his point of view. Most of us experience the illusion of direction when we go to a new place. In spite of the fact that the truth about the direction has been made known to us by a trustworthy person in as clear a way as possible, the illusion very often persists. The reason for this is that the impression of the illusion, of which we were the victims, is fairly settled or a little deep-rooted in the mental habitat. In the same way the illusion (*mithyāvabhāsa*) of the world continues even in the case of a person who has the knowledge of the non-dual Self conveyed by the Upaniṣadic texts. If the illusion continues in spite of the fact that the verbal cognition (*śabda-jñāna*) arising from the Upaniṣads is clear, certain, and indubitable, it is because of the power of the deep-rooted impressions of the beginningless illusion. We do not know when this illusion due to *avidyā* started, and we have been acting all the time under the magical spell of this illusion. And so the impressions of the beginningless illusion which have grown, developed, and strengthened themselves serve as the specific reason (*hetu-viśeṣa*) for the continuance of the illusion of the world, even after the rise of the right knowledge of the non-dual Self through the Upaniṣadic texts. In order to counter these impressions, something more than the verbal cognition arising from the Upaniṣads is required. Maṇḍana says that repeated contemplation (*abhyāsa*) on the content of the verbal cognition generated by the Upaniṣadic texts is necessary in order to root out the impressions of the beginningless illusion. As a result of the repeated contemplation, the impressions of the knowledge of the non-dual reality obtained from the Upaniṣads grow and develop, become powerful and get stabilized in such a way that they are able to remove the impressions of the beginningless illusion, and thereby bring about the manifestation of the real nature of the Self (*ātma-svarūpa-āvirbhāva*). *Karmas* also, argues Maṇḍana, are useful in this regard as they are prescribed by Scripture. Whereas the usefulness of contemplation is quite visible, that of the *karmas* is imperceptible. That *karmas* also are useful to Self-realization is clearly brought out in a passage in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*: 'Him the Brāhmaṇas seek to know by the study of the Veda, by sacrifices (*yajñena*). . . .'[46] Some others, says Maṇḍana, explain the usefulness of *karmas* differently. Since the observance of obligatory rites brings about the destruction of sin, *karmas*, according to them, are useful to Self-realization through destroying the impurities of sins (*kaluṣa-nibarhaṇa-dvāreṇa*) that hinder the attainment of the goal.[47]

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[45] *BS,* Part I, p. 32.

It may be argued that it is impossible to think of any activity, good or bad, deliberately undertaken by a person who has the indubitable knowledge of the non-dual Self. The pursuit of the various activities of a binding character is due to the conceit (*abhimāna*) that the Self is the agent and enjoyer. But this conceit stands contradicted by the knowledge that the Self is neither the agent nor the enjoyer. The knowledge that a person has conditions or determines his behaviour. When a person has known the eastern direction through the help of the rising sun, he will not go in the direction of the west saying that it is the east. In the same way a person who knows that the Self is not the agent and the enjoyer will, according to this argument, scarcely do anything like an agent and enjoyer. The illusory appearances may continue; but he is only a *witness* of them and not a victim to them. This argument, says Maṇḍana, is without any force as it fails to take note of the strength of the knowledge that has arisen through *śabda* vis-à-vis the strength of the deep-rooted impressions of the beginningless illusion. Though there is the right knowledge, its impressions (*saṁskāra*) are not developed, whereas the impressions of the illusion are strong and powerful. The indubitable knowledge which has arisen has not begun its work, whereas the work of the impressions of the illusion is in full swing. Under the bewitching influence of the powerful impressions of the illusion, even the right knowledge may appear differently. It will not be able to bring about any change, and the person will act as before.

Maṇḍana drives home the point by two illustrations. The spectators who witness a drama know definitely that the kings and the queens who appear on the stage are not real kings and queens subject to afflictions; nevertheless, the stage-kings and the stage-queens are the cause of sorrow and fear, which the spectators undergo, when they are witnessing the performance. Though it is known for certain that sugar is sweet, there is the continued experience of bitter taste for him whose mouth is affected by bile. He tastes sugar; the bitter taste which is only illusory makes him miserable when he experiences it as if it is real, and he spits it out. Similarly even for one who has known through the verbal cognition (*śabda-jñāna*) arising from the Upaniṣadic texts that the Self, being the ultimate reality, is non-different from Brahman and that it is neither the agent nor the enjoyer, the illusion of the world continues and he finds himself engaged in activities which are the source of pleasure and cause of misery. Therefore the verbal cognition which arises from the Upaniṣads should be supplemented by certain aids (*sādhanā*) like contemplation in order to remove the impressions of the beginningless illusion. That is why, observes Maṇḍana, the Upaniṣad says: 'The Self should be heard of, reflected on and meditated upon.'[48] This text is significant in that it points out that after getting the knowledge of the Self by hearing the Upaniṣadic texts, one should critically reflect on the content of the cognition obtained from them and then meditate upon it. The direct realization of the non-dual Self is possible only when these means are combined with the verbal cognition arising from the Upaniṣadic texts. Other means like control of the mind, control of the senses, rituals, etc. which are prescribed by Scripture are also necessary to get the realization of the Self. Otherwise, asks Maṇḍana, what are they advised for?

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[46] IV. 4. 22.

[47] *BS*, Part I, p. 35.

Maṇḍana rejects the contention that control of the mind, control of the senses and other means are prescribed for the purpose of getting the knowledge of the Self from Scripture. All that is required for the purpose of getting the verbal cognition from the Upaniṣadic texts is the knowledge of the relation between the word and its meaning (*śabdārtha-sambandha-jñāna*) and not the special means (*sādhana-viśeṣa*) like control of the mind, control of the senses, etc. Since the relation between a word and its meaning is eternal,[49] the Upaniṣadic *śabda* conveys its sense independently of these means. Nor can it be said that the verbal cognition, which arises from the Upaniṣads, lacks certainty and is not indubitable in the absence of these means. If that were the case, how can one adopt the very means like control of the mind, control of the senses, etc. which we come to know only through Scripture? If there is no certainty with regard to what is made known by Scripture, no one will resort to these means which we come to know only through it. Hence all these special means (*sādhana-viśeṣa*) which are indicated by Scripture should be adopted after getting the verbal cognition (*śabda-jñāna*) from the Upaniṣads for attaining Self-realization.[50]

VII

THE BI-FUNCTIONAL NATURE OF KARMA

Maṇḍana is favourably disposed to two other views about the relation between *karma* and knowledge as they are in accordance with his standpoint. One of them explains the relation between *karma* and knowledge in terms of the *principle of two-in-oneness* (*saṁyoga-pṛthaktva*). According to this view, all the *karmas* prescribed in the ritualistic portion (*karma-kāṇḍa*) of the Veda are bi-functional in their character. Since they are enjoined with reference to their respective results like heaven, they are conducive to them; they are also at the same time useful to Self-realization, as there is the scriptural declaration: 'Him the Brāhmaṇas seek to know by the study of the Veda, by sacrifices (*yajñena*) . . .',[51] which brings out the subsidiariness of *karma* to knowledge. That *karmas* subserve two ends—their respective fruits like heaven and also Self-knowledge—should be explained according to the principle of *saṁyoga-pṛthaktva*. It is said: 'When one serves two ends, the relation is *saṁyoga-pṛthaktva*.'[52] For example there is the text: 'He is to tie the beast to the ebony stake'; and there is also the text: 'He who desires virility is to make the stake of ebony.'[53] The ebony wood (*khādira*) as stated in these texts serves two ends—it serves the purpose of sacrifice in the capacity of sacrificial stake and it also serves to bring about virility to the sacrificer. In the same way *karmas* are said to be bi-functional in their character, as they have two distinct functions by conducing to their respective fruits and also to the realization of the Self. Maṇḍana points out that *karma* is subsidiary to knowledge in the sense that it is useful as stated earlier to attain Self-realization; it plays its part like repeated contemplation and other means in bringing about the final manifestation of the Self (*ātma-svarūpa-abhivyakti*). It is not subsidiary to knowledge in the sense in which the *Prayāja,* which helps the *Darśa-pūrṇamāsa* rites in the production of the final result, is said to be subsidiary to them.[54]

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[48] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II. 4. 5.

[49] *Mīmāṁsa-sūtras*, I. 1. 5.

[50] *BS*, Part I, p. 35,

[51] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV. 4. 22.

[52] *Mīmāṁsā-sūtras*, IV. 3. 5.

[53] *Vide BS*, Part II, p. 71.

VIII

KARMA AND PURIFICATION

According to the other view, which is also acceptable to Maṇḍana, *karmas* are intended to purify the person and make him fit for Self-realization. There is the traditional code which says: 'One creates the capacity to attain Brahman through the *mahāyajñas* (*brahma-yajña, deva-yajña, pitṛ-yajña,* etc.) and through sacrifices,'[55] and 'He for whom there have been these forty and eight purificatory ceremonies.'[56] In support of both the views mentioned above, Maṇḍana quotes the *Brahma-sūtra*: 'Since it is enjoined (by Scripture), the *karmas* belonging to the *āśramas* also (should be performed)'.[57] It is evident from this *sūtra* that control of the mind, control of the senses, etc. are not the only means which are required for attaining Self-realization, but the *karmas* belonging to the *āśramas* also are required as they are enjoined by Scripture.[58]

It may be argued that Scripture-ordained rites are not at all required for Self-realization, since it can be attained exclusively through the tranquillizing, contemplative discipline. Maṇḍana is prepared to admit that it is possible for one who observes life-long celibacy (*ūrdhvaretas*) to attain Self-realization exclusively through contemplation in association with control of the mind (*śama*), control of the senses (*dama*), etc. without performing *yajña* and such other scriptural rites. But he is not prepared on that account to ignore or minimize the importance of scriptural rites which are, from his point of view, exceptional means (*sādhana-viśeṣa*). One who supplements the meditative discipline, which by itself leads to Self-realization, by the prescribed *yajñas* and such other rites which are exceptional means, is able to reach the goal far more quickly than otherwise. In other words, even though both of them, viz. the exclusive pursuit of contemplative discipline on the one hand, and the *combined use* of contemplative discipline and ritualistic discipline on the other, lead to the direct intuition of the non-dual Self, there is difference between them in respect of time that is taken to reach the goal. When the relational and indirect knowledge of the non-dual Self derived from the Upaniṣadic *śabda* is combined with repeated contemplation (*abhyāsa*), the goal, viz. the direct intuition of the Self (*ātma-sākṣātkāra*) is reached quickly; but when the relational and indirect knowledge of the non-dual Self is combined with repeated contemplation and scriptural rites, the goal is reached *very* quickly. So in accordance with the nature of the discipline that one adopts after getting the verbal cognition (*śabda-jñāna*) of the non-dual Self, one attains Self-realization quickly or very quickly, slowly or very slowly. In this connection Maṇḍana quotes the authority of Bādarāyaṇa who says: 'And there is need of all works, on account of the scriptural statement of sacrifices and the like; as in the case of the horse.'[59] Maṇḍana explains the *sūtra* and the illustrative expression *'aśvavat'* thus: Since there is the scriptural statement, 'Him the Brāhmaṇas seek to know by the study of the Veda, by sacrifices . . .'[60] the Vedic *karmas* are required for attaining Self-realization, even though it can be attained by means of contemplation (*abhyāsa*); though the goal may be reached by plodding on, without a horse, yet a horse is sought to be employed for gaining time or for avoiding inconvenience.[61]

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[54] *BS*, Part I, p. 36.

[55] Manu, II. 28.

[56] *Gautama-dharma-sūtra*, VIII. 22.

[57] III. 4. 32.

[58] *BS*, Part I, p. 36.
BS, Part II, p. 101.

[59] *Brahma-sūtra*, III. 4. 26.

[60] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV. 4. 22.

[61] *BS*, Part I, pp. 36-37. Compare this with the view

Maṇḍana is a firm believer in *āśrama-dharmas,* not as ends in themselves but as very valuable means to the end. He does not condemn *sannyāsa.* He does not deny that one can enter on the stage of *sannyāsa* directly from the stage of *brahmacarya* and that, exclusively through contemplation in association with the control of the mind, control of the senses, etc. without performing Scripture-ordained *karmas,* a *sannyāsin* reaches the final goal. But he would not accept the contention that *sannyāsa* is indispensable for Brahman-realization. Considering the way in which Maṇḍana explains the importance of *karmas* for attaining Self-realization, it could be said that from Maṇḍana's point of view the scheme of discipline which is available to a competent householder is more efficient than that which a competent *sannyāsin* can avail himself of, for the reason that the former may comprise Scripture-ordained *karmas* and the latter cannot.[62]

Realization, as Prof. Suryanarayana Sastri remarks, is not the monopoly of any class nor of any mode. It may come through spiritual analysis or through the melting of the heart in devotion or through self-surrender in service.[63] Among the post-Śaṅkara Advaitins, Bhāratītīrtha refers to the possibility of realization through meditation on the attributeless Brahman instead of Vedānta-enquiry. The path of Sāṅkhya which is that of enquiry into the purport of Vedāntas, is 'prescribed for those who are intellectually virile and are capable of understanding the meaning of Scripture aright'.[64] But for those who are not able to undertake such an enquiry, Scripture recommends the path of *yoga,* which is that of constant contemplation on the attributeless Brahman. Both the paths lead to the same goal; the difference between the two paths is in respect of the time taken to reach the goal. If Bhāratītīrtha points out that *yoga* is also a means for the attainment of release, Madhusūdanasarasvatī contends that the path of devotion also leads to realization.[65] To Maṇḍana, a householder who combines the contemplative discipline and the ritualistic discipline will be able to attain Self-realization very quickly, whereas a *sannyāsin* can plod on slowly to the final goal. Like Madhusūdanasarasvatī, Maṇḍana is uncompromising with regard to the metaphysical basis of Advaita. If Madhusūdana gives an important place to *bhakti* in the scheme of discipline leading to liberation, Maṇḍana gives an important place to *āśrama-karmas* as very valuable means for the attainment of Brahman-intuition. Maṇḍana is an integrative Advaitin. He does not believe in the absoluteness of *karmas*; nor does he believe in the absoluteness of renunciation. If the Mīmāṁsakas present the thesis, viz. the absoluteness of *karma,* Advaitins like Śaṅkara and Sureśvara present the antithesis, viz. the absoluteness of renunciation. Maṇḍana, however, presents the synthesis, viz. absoluteness of the Absolute realized through renunciation in *karmas,* for he recommends the association of the contemplative discipline with the ritualistic discipline for the purpose of attaining Self-realization. Maṇḍana, as Professor Suryanarayana Sastri rightly points out, is one of our earliest philosophers to suggest a synthesis of contemplation and *karma* through a synoptic vision.[66]

(*Concluded*)

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of Bhāskara. 'Bhāskara bases his whole exposition of *jñāna-karma-samuccaya* on the classical analogy of the *sūtra* III. 4.26, i.e. *aśvavat.* The horse is fit to be used, not as a plodding animal for ploughing the field, but for riding. It is not a mere beast of burden, but is the symbol of the glory of motion. Likewise *karma,* rationalized by *jñāna* becomes the dynamic energy that is used in the glorious ascent to the Absolute.' *Vide The Philosophy of Bhedābheda* (Srinivasa Varadachari & Co., Madras, 1934), p. 118.

[62] *Vide* Introduction to *BS*, p. 36.

[63] See his article 'An Advaitin's Plea for Continuity', *Proceedings and Transactions of the Ninth All-India Oriental Conference,* Trivandrum, December 1937, pp. 520-28.

[64] *Vide* T.M.P. Mahadevan, *The Philosophy of Advaita* (Luzac & Co., London, 1938), p. 245.

[65] *Vide* Modi's translation of *Siddhāntabindu,* Appendix II.

[66] *Ibid.*

'HE IS A LIVING GOD AND GOD OF THE LIVING'

BY PROF. K. P. S. CHOUDHURY

There are passages here and there in the Bible which have hitherto baffled all attempts to elucidate them, and remain as much puzzling now as they have ever been. The present article is a humble attempt to examine the true implication of one such passage.

When many had gone to see the sepulchre where the crucified body of Jesus was laid, they were told by an angel to go away as the crucified Jesus was not to be met with among those dead ones whose bodies had been burned there in the usual way. In the Bible (Luke xx. 38), there occurs a sentence which reads: 'For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto Him'. In the same gospel (xxiv. 5), we read: 'Why seek ye the living among the dead?'

The word 'living' both in reference to God and to man, not to speak of other animate objects, needs some clarification. As we shall presently endeavour to show, the word 'living' has a deeply involved spiritual meaning. First of all we must be clear as to what 'life' means. In an elementary sense, by 'life' we understand that state of a being in which natural functions are or may be performed. Conversely, 'death' means that state of man in which there is a total and permanent cessation of all the vital functions; in other words, extinction of life. It is obvious, if these meanings are correct, that 'life' and 'death' represent two wholly different states of a being. Evidently, these two words have not been used in this elementary sense in the Bible. Then, in what sense or senses does the Bible use the words 'living' and 'dead'?

The phrase 'living God' appears five times in *Pauline Epistles* and four times in the *Epistles to Hebrews*. Various authors have given various meanings. One emphasizes the point that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was no idol; another asserts that God is not a metaphysical abstraction, perhaps in the sense that God is not merely an object of thought. Some have given short explanations; some have commented upon divine attributes and qualities. But there is one real dissertation, if we may say so, upon the phrase 'He is a living God and God of the living.'

The essential story of Christ is that of his living person. This person is not a mere man; he is not dead; he is alive and active. That is why Christ is not a person who lived once upon a time in Palestine and said something. He is a reality who is now present. To say that by the use of the word 'living' before God is implied that he is not an idol, is not to say much or to say anything which has a spiritual significance. Even the idol worshippers know as much that the idols they worship are merely the representation of something beyond. Idols remind the worshippers of God of their conception possessing certain divine attributes. It is too obvious to need any emphasis or elucidation that idol is not God Himself.

According to Hindu philosophy and religion, the conception of Brahman as the sole Reality and as being without any attributes or qualities, carried to its logical conclusion, develops into pure non-dualism in which the world of Prakṛti is a mere appearance. Besides, we cannot bring the idea of Brahman into the limited circle of our mind without attributing some quality to It. It only remains as a principle to which even no gender could be attributed. We have to express It in the neuter gender and call It 'That' or 'It' because gender belongs to the created world.

And yet when we associate the idea of 'gender' with God, do we not think of a god with some kind of form possessing qualities or attributes? God, when spoken of as He or She, cannot be but a personal God, not in the sense that He is cognizable by any of the physical sense-organs, but a Being to be thought of as someone distinct and separate from other physical, tangible objects to be seen in the phenomenal world, and not 'a spirit' as Jesus said in reply to Peter's question, 'what is God ?'. The moment we accept the view that God is 'a spirit', we are forced to conclude that God is a metaphysical abstraction or, to put in another way, the cause of creation and not the creator in its commonly accepted meaning. A formless being can only be 'a spirit' without adjuncts and without attributes. To say that God possesses all the best qualities or attributes and lives above all living things in flesh and blood is nothing short of magnified personalization of God, and again is not an attempt at elucidation or explanation of the word 'living' used in reference to God, much less an attempt to satisfy an inquisitive mind regarding what God is and how 'He' could be living in the sense in which men are said to be 'living'.

We see that the word 'living' has been used to qualify both God as well as men (who are not dead), as Luke puts it. Obviously the word 'living' in reference to God as well as man cannot bear the same interpretation. Man dies; God does not die. Death is always associated with those animate objects that are born. God is never born. This being the case, 'living God' cannot possibly mean a being 'living above everything flesh and blood can conceive', by saying which we simply try to explain away the difficulty. To say that He lives with His people by grace is to rob oneself of the grace of saying that God is not like a human being made of flesh and blood.

In order to reconcile these various conflicting ideas, we think that the safest and the easiest way out of the difficulty will be to seek satisfaction in the spiritual meaning that man is essentially 'a spirit' other than the supreme spirit which is God.

The symptoms of life are easily and in a great degree discernible in conscious beings. The purer the degree of consciousness, the higher the manifestation of life. If we pursue and develop this idea, we get as near enough as possible that 'pure consciousness' is God as the metaphysicians say, and that God is the 'God of the living' in the sense that He is closer to them who are conscious or aware of His omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence. It does not mean that the animals and birds and the rest of the creatures are not dear to Him, if we take Him to be someone vested with all the attributes that we, as human beings, are capable of thinking. The moment we give Him a form, however glorious and grand, we at once circumscribe Him and limit His powers and potentialities. Apart from the conflict between the concept of a personal and a formless being, many other difficulties and confusions will arise, and instead of removing them we shall be making them worse confounded. A rational criterion of judgement should be: how far the interpretation that is sought to make fits in with the general trend of thought and feeling encouraged in it.

When we read the words in Luke xx, 'for He is not a God of the dead, but of the living', we seem to get a sort of clue as to how to interpret the word 'living' as much as to interpret the word 'dead'. It would be absurd to suggest that God is partial to the 'living', i.e. to those who are existing upon this earth engaged in some act or pursuit. The 'dead' are as dear to Him as the 'living'. He is the Lord of the living and the dead. No partiality can be attributed to a personal or an impersonal God. Whether 'He' is like a man or man is made in His image, does not encourage the thought that He thinks, acts or wills like any human being. What seems to us to be the only correct meaning of the passage is that God, as a personal being (He), is "of the living" in the deeper sense that He is dearer to that man who is spiritually alive, who lives in constant awareness of Him, eats, sleeps, walks in His immediate presence. This spiritual man, the saintly man to use a familiar expression, is dear to Him, dearer than the one who is dead in the spiritual sense again, i.e. who does not know God, or worse still having known Him, has abandoned his duties towards Him.

There is nothing to elucidate or interpret if by the living and the dead we understand the only distinction that the sentient Nature makes between the two. Jesus, in the physical sense, is as much dead as Judas. But Christ, the Son of God, lives on in spite of his crucifixion. This patent truth should bring out the difference between the 'living' and the 'dead'. To be entitled to be called the Son of God, one has to live like Jesus. He showed humanity the way to live in God, for God and with God. When He uttered in protest the words that none was his father, none was his brother who did not do the will of his Father in heaven, He simply proclaimed in an unambiguous language that to be one with God, to be able to say as he said that 'my Father and I are one', one must live in God and live in the manner indicated by him. Austerity of mind, speech, and action was insisted upon. If one could answer effectively by saying only yes or no, one need not make a flowery speech. The economy in the use of words is the austerity of speech that was encouraged to be practised by Jesus, so that the chances of telling lies, exaggerating, or self-glorification could be minimized. All our actions must be directed towards the betterment of self by active faith in God, by active good to others, by detaching our minds from all the material things which we hold dear and which have the deadly impeding effect upon spiritual progress. This is the austerity of action. Discipline of the mind by dissociating it from the objects of sense, is austerity of the mind advocated by him. In other words, he wanted to raise mankind from the level of the animals to that of spiritualized beings living a divine life. Anyone who lives otherwise is spiritually dead. To be living is to be actively engaged *all the time* in doing what is good to others, what is pleasing in the eyes of God.

A man is said to be awake, aware, or alive only when he slumbers not in ignorance, when he eats not like a glutton, when he perjures not, hurts not, attaches himself not to the gross objects of the senses, and neglects not paramount duty towards God and His creation. Self-awareness leads to the awareness of God. When this spiritual awakening comes, when man becomes conscious of the all-pervading spirit, God, representative head or father, as if He were, of the family of mankind, then that man is said to be 'living' and to that man *He* is a 'living God', i.e. a spiritual being—omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent, and 'not an idol, a metaphysical abstraction, or merely a being above everything flesh and blood can conceive'.

It is man's conception or knowledge of God that imparts worth and value to Him. It is the consciousness of his self, in the higher sense, we mean the metaphysical sense, that entitles him to be called a living man and it is to this sort of 'living' man, He is a 'living' God, i.e. a God who is infinitely more conscious of his services. He serves him who serves Him. This is the mutual relationship that is forged by the common bond of spirit between the living God and the living man.

Creation involves design and purpose and mental activity, and necessarily involves a creator of some kind. Only gradually and very imperfectly we can form any conception of what that Creator is like or what Its attributes are. But we are sure of one thing that It is a superhuman controlling and guiding power which regulates the cosmos as we in our insignificant way regulate the conduct of ordinary affairs. We know that man on his bodily and sensual side is akin to animals but on the mental and spiritual side, above them and near akin to the Divine. Thus it is this mystic, spiritual bond between God and man which is emphasized in the passage 'He is a living God and God of the living'. This is the spiritual truth which is emphasized in the Bible. It is not only a spiritual truth, it is also a scientific truth that in no being there is any specific energy. It merely directs the energy which it finds available. Life is a form of consciousness. Consciousness is manifested in life and the larger, the higher the consciousness, the greater and better the being. It is the 'living' man alone who can say that: 'He is a living God.' To discover this grand spiritual and scientific truth our consciousness should be purified. The energies can be properly canalized by a strict direction alone, and that direction comes from discipline, both physical and mental, and then the spirit within us begins to soar higher and higher to seek its identity with the purest Spirit, God.

This is the ecstatic revelation and mystical intuition that the passage in the Bible quoted above makes, and in the realization of this spiritual truth or unruffled beatific consciousness, the struggling seeker after Truth finds peace, happiness, and trans-terrestrial spiritual bliss.

WHITEHEAD'S CONCEPTION OF EDUCATION

By Dr. B. V. Kishan

'The sum of human knowledge and complexity of human problems are perpetually increasing; therefore every generation must overhaul its educational methods if time is to be found for what is new. The humanistic elements in education must remain; but they must be sufficiently simplified to leave room for the other elements without which the new world rendered possible by science can never be reached' says Bertrand Russell in his book *On Education* (p.26). The dynamism of a society is related to the type of education which it provides to its members. From childhood onwards, the individual needs the guidance of parents, and at a later stage, the help of the teacher becomes essential. Mind is adoptive and is highly sensitive to environmental influences. The growth in human understanding is due to the absorption and accumulation of information and knowledge. Learning must enable a person to adjust himself to the various demands of the society. The individual is the unit of society, and he needs attention. One of the functions of education is to inculcate in the individual the habit of correct thinking and judgement.

Down the ages, educators have played a constructive role in the building of a progressive and enlightened society. The utility and function of the social institutions would be jeopardized if individuals are allowed to become their own counsels. The cause of education has been pushed forward in one form or the other. In ancient India, we find rituals advancing the aims of education. Religious practices and rituals were associated with the principles of education, and learning became an important *saṁskāra*. It was the sacred duty of the parents to educate their children. Both religion and metaphysics exercised a strong influence on the masses, and were utilized to further the ideals of education.[1] The proper age to start children's education, the different duties of the parents to fulfil the obligation of providing education to their children, and other connected issues were given a religious interpretation. The following of the injunctions of religion was a safeguard and a guarantee for children's education. Parents were happy that they not only discharged the duty of providing education to their children, but also were the recipients of God's blessings. In ancient India, the educators and teachers were religious figures and *sannyāsins*. These religious persons gathered round themselves a group of young boys, who were sent by their parents to receive education from them. The division of life into four stages is also significant. The first stage, known as *brahmacarya*, is that of compulsory studentship. This division of life into different stages was an arrangement of practical importance. It bifurcated life on realistic grounds, by confining each stage to one important function of life. The whole scheme, as it was based on rational grounds, became in the later period a source of uncompromising conservatism, which discouraged daring speculation and experimentation with new ideas. It was conservatism which advanced anti-rationalism in every sphere, and produced stagnation in society and in the fields of knowledge and thought. As a consequence, it effected adversely the imaginative faculties of the later generations by stressing on the mechanical repetition and memorizing of a few texts, regarded as sacred and thought to contain the last word on everything. Such an education proved its harmfulness to the coming generations. In an atmosphere of stagnation in the growth of human knowledge, any attempt to discover new facts through observation and research would be discouraged and ridiculed. In the Whiteheadean terminology, this situation is the result of the accumulation of inert ideas in the field of education. Not only in India but in other countries as well, history repeated itself, and educational systems became stereotyped. Much importance was given to knowledge which was codified hundreds of years ago, and the efforts to experiment with new ideas, and the reassessment and change of the old systems of thought and action were regarded as sacrilegious. Research and investigation remained thwarted, and the imparting of archaic knowledge continued in the absence of needful and imminent changes in the curriculum.

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[1] A. S. Altekar, *Education in Ancient India*, Ch. 1. (1934).

Old ideas are the legacy of the past, handed over to the present generation, but some of them are outmoded. Any system of education would fail to fulfil its purpose if it is based on ideas, which have lost their bearing and relevancy in the changed context. Such a system of education strengthens the stronghold of conservative and reactionary forces. Whitehead points out the necessity of 'keeping knowledge alive, of preventing it from becoming inert, which is the central problem of all education'.[2] Every theory of education, in its relation to man and society, fulfills an important function, and guarantees the gradual progress of man's potentialities, which would lead to the strengthening of the foundations of society and state.

That education should remain a combination of constructive ideas and facts has been accepted by all philosophers and educators. Every system of education, ancient or modern, begins by emphasizing on the need of providing useful instruction, which could equip the individual with the necessary amount of theoretical and practical knowledge. The function of education is to guide the mental and intellectual growth of the individual. Whitehead says that life is 'essentially periodic'.[3] The life of the individual has different aspects, and every aspect plays an appropriate role. All the phases of life are important to man. Education has to bring forth a revolution in man's life by developing the hidden potentialities. The older patterns of education assumed that the development of the individual's understanding is 'a uniform steady advance undifferentiated by change of type, of alteration in pace.' This is based on wrong assumptions according to Whitehead. Whitehead takes into account the mental growth of different periods and thereby devises a suitable pattern of education, which can facilitate the intellectual and psychological growth of the individual. He elucidates three different stages. They are 'the stage of romance, the stage of precision, and the stage of generalization.'[4]

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[2] A. N. Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*, p. 7, McMillan (1929).

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

Whitehead's analysis of the problem of education stems from the very roots of the psychological aspects of the individual. For the early and the later stages of the individual's development, different types of education are required. According to him the present educational theory and practice is not without blemishes. Whitehead considers a number of educational theories, and puts forward his own educational philosophy.

The purpose of education is not only to teach the individual the facts of knowledge, but also to make him understand the importance of human endeavour and enterprise. Philosophy which explains the problems of knowledge, human existence, and metaphysics, is the suitable medium for the growth of educational ideas. It is no wonder that philosophers both in the past and the present have played an important role in the formulation of educational systems. The aim of education is to train the individual for the struggle of life. Human experiences need illumination through knowledge. To attain this end, every progressive scheme of education fulfils an important task by guaranteeing the progress of the individual, in order to facilitate social progress.

Whitehead is not an educationist primarily. According to him, no speculative system of philosophy could bypass the problem of education. Man remains the centre of philosophy and metaphysical explanations. The truths of philosophy illuminate the different problems of life. Accordingly, in Whitehead's system of philosophy, concrete ideas of educational value could be found. In his works dealing with the manifold problems of human existence, we find penetrating remarks possessing educational value. The theme of *The Aims of Education* is again to expound a consistent system of education. An understanding of these ideas on education makes it evident that Whitehead wants to develop a new theory of education, suitable to the needs of the present age. The problem of education receives his critical attention, and the solution which he puts forward admirably answers some of the pressing questions which are troubling the modern educationists.

To Whitehead, education accompanies and stimulates the growth of culture in the individual. Only correct knowledge could save man from destruction. True knowledge only could solve the different problems of life. Accumulation of knowledge, without corresponding evaluation of its functioning, results in pedantry. A heavy syllabus cannot guarantee the transmission of knowledge. The knowledge imparted to the individual ought to be understood and digested by him. Only then the knowledge gained could be employed in practical life. Educational theory ought to impart insight into the deep relation existing between knowledge and the life of man by creating an atmosphere, where knowledge could be used to help man in crossing various hurdles. Whitehead sees the test of education in its practical value.

Education cannot be separated from the total rhythm of life. Education which is based on stagnant ideas cannot flow freely into the stream of the individual's life, and coalesce with its different phases. The discovery of the interrelationship amongst ideas is also a very important factor. Accumulation of facts without an idea of their mutual bearing is harmful. Whitehead says, 'We should not endeavour to use propositions in isolation.'[5] But it does not mean that all facts and propositions should be grouped together, and whenever chance occurs applied as a whole. This is not a desirable technique. What is implied here is to notice the existence of deeper values underlying all propositions, and to employ the different propositions with this particular view in the background. Mere grouping and cataloguing of facts would result in barrenness and aridity. If education is to be saved from barrenness, then the 'theoretical ideas should always find important application within the pupils' curricula'.

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[5] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Whitehead emphasizes on the free movement of ideas, which is a prerequisite for all new discoveries and advancement in knowledge. The ideal of conjoinment between theory and practice, in the field of education, is an intricate problem indeed. The approach adopted by Whitehead is similar to the attempts made by Gandhiji in India. Gandhiji placed a premium value on the welding of theory and practice in his scheme of education.

Education has to prepare the individual to face the different hardships of life. Gandhiji's effort was to develop a scheme of education which could be useful in a two-fold way. The Gandhian scheme of basic education could prepare the individual in the twin fields of theory and practice. Both Gandhiji's and Whitehead's ideas on education are the result of their experiences. Whitehead's analysis of educational problems is philosophical, and is characterized by the sense of urgency. Both of them explicitly mention that education ought to prepare the individual to face the realities of life with courage and confidence. Gandhiji's interest in education was a result of the social, economic, and political conditions prevalent in India, especially the pitiful plight of the educated Indians, due to the lack of employment opportunities. Gandhiji aimed to root out anomalies from the educational system of India. Elaborating the Gandhian pattern of education, B. Kumarappa stresses on the following points : '(a) that true education of the individual, which is all round development of his faculties, is best obtained through action. If, biologically, thinking develops in man only as an end to action, as evolutionary psychologists tell us, then Gandhiji's scheme of education bases itself on the sound and indisputable fact that knowledge and understanding develop in relation to problems set by action. Information thrust on the mind apart from action is most often only a burden on the memory and causes intellectual indigestion if nature does not come to the rescue and cast such learning into oblivion ;

'(b) further, this education, if it is to draw out to the full the latent capacities of the child, has to be through a craft. For it is a craft, which is capable of being manipulated by the child that sets problems to him and calls out in relation to them his thought, character, and artistic sense. Under literary education, on the other hand, whatever training is given to the child is given in isolated sections. The mind is sought to be trained in the class apart from manual work, the hand and eyes in manual work apart from mind, and the heart in art and religion apart from the mind and action. But since the child is an organic unit, it is obvious that it is only such training as draws on all the faculties in a correlated manner that can best develop a harmonious and well balanced personality. In this age of over-specialization and compartmentalism, this plea of Gandhiji's for integration in the education of the child is timely and most valuable.'[6]

The progress of any society or country is in no lesser way related to the type of education prevalent in it. The individual belongs to a nation and his existence is rooted in its cultural heritage. It is through education received by him that the individual becomes capable of adjusting himself to the cultural and social environment of his country. Jacques Maritain points out that 'the job of education is not to shape the Platonist man-in-himself, but to shape a particular child belonging to a given nation, a given social environment, a given historical age.'[7]

Whitehead's scheme of education lays emphasis not only on the theoretical but also on the practical and the moral aspects of the problem. 'I recur to the thought of the Benedictines, who saved for mankind the vanishing civilization of the ancient world by linking together knowledge, labour, and moral energy. Our danger is to conceive practical affairs as the kingdom of evil, in which success is only possible by the extrusion of ideal aims. I believe that such a conception is a fallacy directly negatived by practical experience. In education this error takes the form of a mean view of technical training. Our forefathers in the dark ages saved themselves by embodying high ideals in great organizations. It is our task, without servile imitation, boldly to exercise our creative energies'.[8]

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[6] M. K. Gandhi, *Basic Education*, Editor's Note, p. 6.

[7] Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroads*, p. 1, Yale University Press (1955).

Whitehead's educational philosophy is comprehensive. He has given in detail the types of education which should be given from the elementary stage to the university level. There is hardly any break or discontinuity between one stage and the other. Every educational scheme is organic in nature. 'The main lines of Whitehead's educational vision I should call four. They are not even as separate as the four sides of a square—but perhaps they are as distinguishable as the strands in a rope. To name them (and therefore to do them an immense injustice), I might call them the Living Process of Education, the Living Utility of Education, the Living Rhythm of Education, and the Living Quality of Final Educational Ends.[9]

The demand of the modern age is to achieve specialization in every field. Specialized courses are the need of the hour. Without specialists, the frontiers of knowledge would remain narrow in scope and stunted in growth. At the same time the growing number of specialists, who lack the essential background of the unity of knowledge, are creating a fragmentary instead of an integral attitude in the minds of the individuals. This in turn is creating a threat to the peaceful existence of the human society. The manifold dangers, which could result from the practice of extreme specialization in different fields of knowledge, have been analysed clearly by Whitehead. A balanced view of education has to develop further integration in the fields of knowledge, allowing the growth of specialization in every field. The idea of unity underlying every branch of knowledge must be inculcated in the mind of the individual. Herein lies the formidable task of education. In the absence of such an integral outlook in the field of education, it would be well-nigh impossible to expect any amelioration in the present situation. Clever arguments, which aim to justify the superiority of sciences over humanities, must be looked with suspicion. 'Whitehead is anxious to emphasize the idea that there should not be an artificial dichotomy, set up between general education and specialized studies of some specific subject matter. In his opinion, the proper method is to deal with specific subjects by employing generality of outlook. Further, the best way to encourage generality of outlook is to arouse genuine interest in one subject. The good student will quickly realize that one subject leads to another, as in the case of the measuring of the boundaries of a community. Gradually, the general principles of human knowledge will emerge.'[10]

Whitehead's philosophy of education, though broad-based, is not exhaustive. It is sketchy, and lacks several important details. No attempt has been made to take account of the educational research carried on in different universities. But the absence of details in Whitehead's philosophy of education does not mitigate the value of those broad educational principles emphasized by him. While details can easily be worked out through research and study, the discovery of the universal principles is the work of a genius.

Our age is characterized by a reliance on the democratic ideals in every sphere of life. In order to strengthen the democratic way of life, education has to become more common and within the reach of everybody. Democratic education could only open the doors of opportunities in equal measure to all individuals. Education only could pave the way towards success and prosperity. An integral scheme of education could help in the blossoming of the inner potentialities of man. Whitehead has great respect for the democratic ideal of "equality". There must be equality of opportunity in education. With characteristic insight, however, he warns against the equality of achievement, obtained by letting the most inferior student "set the pace". Demanding the same educational performance from all is contrary to the basic principle of democracy: the fullest possible development of the individual. Individuals are different. They should not be compressed arbitrarily within the confines of one standard educational "strait jacket".[11]

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[8] A. N. Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*, pp. 91-92.

[9] *Whitehead's Views on Education* by Henry Wyman Holmes in *The Philosophy of A. N. Whitehead*. Ed. by P. A. Schilpp, p. 635 Tudor (1951).

[10] A. H. Johnson, *Whitehead's Philosophy of Civilization*, p. 119, Beacon Press (1958).

Modern education in a democratic society must recapture the old Roman stress on the 'greatness of man'. Education will not aid in the achieving of civilization unless it is recognized that human beings are capable of genuine devotion to truth, beauty, and goodness; capable of artistic activity, adventure, and that supreme achievement, peace.

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[11] *Ibid.*, p. 142.

SPIRITUAL PRECEPTS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

By Mrs. Courtenaye Olden

Swami Vivekananda concentrated all religion into a few words with his now-famous statement:

'Each soul is potentially divine.

The goal is to manifest this divine within, by controlling nature, external and internal.

Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy, by one, or more, or all of these—and be free.

This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details.'

This most glorious of all truths is a fact which the great Swami had realized in his own life, and is the basis on which all his teachings rest. He said, 'Only what I myself have proved by experience do I teach.'

Swami Vivekananda, or Swamiji as he is often called, spoke to the modern man in up-to-date language, appealing to both his heart and his reason with his logical, scientific, practical presentation of the highest spiritual truths.

He spoke always in terms of strength. He hated any thought of weakness. He said that strength is life, and weakness is death, that infinite power, infinite perfection is already in every man, and by practice that power is aroused.

What sort of practice? Swami Vivekananda said that any method that helps us to go to God is a *yoga*. There are innumerable *yogas*, or paths to God, but if we practise the systematized *yogas*, our success will be speedier. The systematized *yogas* are the four methods he mentioned in the first quotation: work, worship, psychic control, or philosophy.

Swamiji encouraged all to think in the highest terms; to aspire to the highest. He used to say, 'Say to yourself "*Soham, Soham*—I am He, I am He." Tell yourself this day and night.' By constantly thinking of our oneness with God or the absolute Reality, we will be transformed. This, of course, is a practice belonging to the path of *jñāna*, or philosophy, simply put. The basis for this practice is brought out when Swamiji discusses the immortality of the soul, evolution and involution, concluding that we are part of the cosmic consciousness which got involved, and we must complete the circle and go back to this cosmic intelligence. This cosmic intelligence is what people call God, or Brahman, what the materialists perceive as force and the agnostics as that infinite inexpressible beyond. We are all parts of That.

Concerning the path of mind control, or *rāja-yoga,* he said there is no limit to man's power, the power of words, and the power of mind. What we are now is the result of what we have done, and what we have done, we can undo. Each action, each thought leaves its impression on the mind after it is gone, and when a large number of these impressions is left, they coalesce and become a habit. It is said, habit is second nature; Swamiji says it is first nature also, and the whole nature of man; everything that we are is the result of habit. That gives us consolation because, if it is only habit, we can make and unmake it at any time. ... Never say any man is hopeless, because he only represents a character, a bundle of habits, which can be checked by new and better ones.

But while we are trying to gain control of our minds by this or any other *yoga,* we must eliminate all the sources of disturbance that we can. One great source of such disturbance is the feeling of hatred or even of resentment. Why should we not hate anyone? Swami Vivekananda says because all life is one; he said he pitied the oppressed, but he pitied even more the oppressor, because the oppressor does not know he is oppressing his own self. This is the truth sublime, but Swamiji also gives us the truth mundane using a scientific comparison. He reminds us that 'There is no such thing as motion in a straight line. Every motion is in a circle. ... A straight line, infinitely projected, must end in a circle. ... Just as in the case of electricity, the modern theory is that the power leaves the dynamo and completes the circle back to the dynamo, so with hate and love; they must come back to the source. Therefore, do not hate anybody, because that hatred which comes out from you must, in the long run, come back to you. If you love, that love will come back to you, completing the circuit. It is as certain as can be that every bit of hatred that goes out of the heart of a man comes back to him in full force; nothing can stop it. Similarly every impulse of love comes back to him.'

Swami Vivekananda also spoke of unselfish work, or *karma-yoga,* as a direct path to God, and he gave the secret of such work. He said to pay as much attention to the means as to the end. Let that work be our worship for the time being. If all our attention is concentrated on the means while we are working, the work will be properly done. Such dedicated work purifies the heart and when the heart is purified, the Lord reveals Himself there. But we must be careful to work with non-attachment, either for the sake of the Lord, or for the sake of the work itself—duty for duty's sake—without seeking any reward.

Bhakti-yoga, Swamiji said, is the science of higher love; it shows us how to direct it; how to make it lead us to spiritual blessedness. *Bhakti-yoga* does not say 'Give up'; it only says 'Love, love the Highest', and everything low naturally falls off from him, the object of whose love is this Highest.

This is an easy and natural path for most people. The Lord is the great magnet, and we are all like iron filings; we are being constantly attracted by Him, and all of us are struggling to reach Him. Everyone we love in life is loved because of Him, because He dwells in the beloved. Whether we know it or not, this is the real attraction. Everything we desire in life, we desire because of Him, because we think the object desired will bring us happiness, and all happiness of any kind is merely a fraction of the Bliss which is God.

In *bhakti-yoga,* therefore, the central secret is to know that the various passions and feelings, and emotions in the human heart are not wrong in themselves; only they have to be given a higher and higher direction. The highest direction is that which takes us to God; every other direction is lower.

One contribution of Swami Vivekananda is unique in spiritual history—his doctrine of service. One day at Dakshineshwar in 1884, when Swamiji was young, Sri Ramakrishna was explaining the essence of the Vaiṣṇava religion, and concluded by saying that one should practise compassion for all beings. No sooner had he uttered the words 'compassion for all beings' than he suddenly went into the super-conscious state. Regaining partial external consciousness in a short time, he continued, 'Talk of compassion for beings? Who are you to bestow compassion on beings? No, no; not compassion to *jīvas*, but service to them as Śiva.'

Jīva, of course, means embodied being, and Śiva is a name of God. Many persons heard these words, but only Narendranath, as Swamiji was called at that time, was set on fire by them. At once he understood that Sri Ramakrishna had revealed a new mellowed means of discovering the Truth, synthesizing the non-dual knowledge of Vedānta with sweet devotion to the Lord. He said: 'Now the Vedānta of the forest can be brought out and applied in practice to the work-a-day world.' Since embodied beings can never rest for a moment without doing work, it goes without saying that it is only the work of the service of *jīvas* as Śiva, (of man as God) that should be performed, and that action done in that spirit will enable them to reach the Goal sooner than otherwise. 'If the divine Lord ever grants me an opportunity,' he said, 'I will proclaim everywhere in the world this wonderful truth I have heard today. I will preach this truth to the learned and the ignorant, to the rich and the poor, to the high-born and the low.'

Fortunately for us, he did get an opportunity to speak of these things, and so we find ourselves here today, celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Swami Vivekananda.

What do Swamiji's precepts mean to us? What is the use of our trying to gain the highest knowledge? Swami Vivekananda says it will take away all our misery. 'All misery comes from fear, from unsatisfied desire.' By the practice of spiritual disciplines, 'man will find that he never dies, and then he will have no more fear of death. When he knows that he is perfect, he will have no vain desires, and both these causes being absent, there will be no more misery—there will be perfect bliss, even in this body.'

EUROPEAN RENAISSANCE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

By Dr. Paresh Nath Mukherjee

The Renaissance which progressed under the political and economic security assured by the Tudors, the Holy Hermandad, the Valois, the Habsbourgs, the Jagellons of Lithuania and Poland, the Varegues of Moscow, and the bourgeois of Germany and Italy, was already an accomplished fact by the end of the fifteenth century. Even if it did not promote economic prosperity with political equality, it did not fail to promote the joint progress of economic prosperity and political liberty. Liberty, the best fruit of modern political evolution, and tolerance emerged triumphant as the most important lessons of history out of the sorry and sordid tale of ceaseless persecution and intolerance of the Middle Ages. Thus, to take only one solitary example, the League of Cambrai was made in 1508-09 'against Venice and the Turks', which shows that economic and political interests were not based on narrow communal considerations. And on two occasions, once in 1506 and again in 1519, the Turks had officially invited Michael Angelo to live in their court. New arts, styles, and fashions were becoming more important every day in preference to the religious factors. The fact that Queen Elizabeth should possess three thousand robes made probably greater impression on the people than religion. New and more profitable commodities of commerce such as sugar, alcohol, spices, and so on gave a new complexion not only to commerce but to the entire life and culture of the people. That a new luxury and refinement had already come upon the society is clear from a number of examples. Thus, in 1545, Paris entertained Catherine de Medici with fourteen types of meat service,[1] and on Friday, the 30th March 1571, entertained Queen Elizabeth of Austria with nineteen types of fish service.[2] Tourism, schools of dance, music, philosophy, arts, crafts, painting, and so on grew in number and quality. If in the Middle Ages the Church and clergy were all in all and the custodians of law and keeper of the conscience of men and nations, after the Renaissance there was the birth of nations and individuals, and the Church was relegated to the background. The forceful diatribes of Savanarola in Florence against the Roman Church from 1494 to 1498 is only too well known, and it did its work. From 1536 Geneva under Calvin was enjoying a sort of theocracy in which the Pope had no place. And in spite of the great efforts of Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit Order (1537), of Philippe of Neri, the founder of the Oratorians (1548), and the Council of Trent (1545-1563), to reinstate Catholic religion and the influence of the Pope in politics, the modern world had been irrevocably committed to new ideas of the new age. Protestantism and Renaissance were accomplished facts. The darkness, tyranny, oppression, inhuman atrocities of the Church, and the petty rulers so characteristic of the Middle Ages were gone when Martin Luther burnt the Papal Bull,[3] and a new sense of freedom, liberty and progress was born in their place. Yet we must remember that the Protestant protest was not against religion or God as such, but against the Pope and the abuses of the Papal Church. For when the Protestant reformer, Martin Luther, went to the Diet at Worms[4] to answer for his revolt against established authority of the Church, he went singing a song, since immortalized both for its intrinsic value and for its historical significance, 'A stronghold sure is our God, A good defence and a weapon'.[5] So, the anti-religious or irreligious element in the Renaissance was not the work of Luther.

In this connection it must be admitted that towards the close of the fourteenth century the Catholic Church was in need of great reform. But every attempt at reform failed. In vain the Council of Constance (1414-1418), Council of Bale (1431-1449), Council of Pisa (1511-1513), Council of Latran (1512-13), and the Congregations of the Brothers of Common Life (1384), of the Religious of Windesheim Abbey (1395), the Benedectines of Bürsfeld (1450), the Carmelites (1452), the Minimes of Saint Francois de Paule (1474), tried to reform the Catholic Church through poverty and sacrifice. Then followed the revolts of Wyclif, Wat Tytler, John Ball, Jean Hus and Luther. After the Protestant revolt man discovered himself as he had never done so far. 'The science of the Middle Ages was theology, the study of God. The science of Renaissance is Humanism, the study of man'.[6]

Much work was already done and the Renaissance was already sufficiently established before 1500 A.D. Our task in this article is to study its progress in the sixteenth century. One of the most outstanding men in sixteenth century Italy was Vasari (1512-1574), who was at once a great biographer and a painter. Then followed Vinci, Michael

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[1] 'des quatorze services de viandes'.
[2] 'aux dix-neuf services de poissons'.
[3] December 10, 1520.
[4] In 1521.
[5] 'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott Ein gute Wehr und Waffen'.
[6] Faure, P. *La Renaissance*, p. 124.

Angelo, Benvenuto Cellini, and others who were not only artists but also great writers, thinkers, and savants. Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), the illegitimate son of a solicitor of Florence, is noted for his treatise on painting and his manuscripts conserved in Paris and London, made of his art a 'matter of spirit' and a 'divine consolation'. Inspired by him his artistic tradition was continued by Belltrafio, Solario, Da Seste, and above all by Luini (1480-1532) and Sodoma (1477-1549).

Raphael (1483-1520), together with Giovanni Bellini (1430-1516), the founder of the Venetian School of painting and the painter Francia of Bologne established a new tradition in Rome. The colouring of Sebastiano del Piombo (1485-1547) and the famous painting *The Acts of the Apostles* (1516-1519) by Van Aelst of Brussels in imitation of the cartoons of Raphael made history in their own time.

Florentine by origin, Michael Angelo Buonarroti (1475-1564), the renowned painter, artist, sculptor, and architect, is noted particularly for his painting *The Last Judgment* in the Sistine chapel. His 'David', worked in the purest Italian marble (1504), was a unique specimen of sculpture which 'consecrated his reputation', so that in the next year (1505) Julius II invited him to Rome. In 1550 he executed 'with passion and love'[7] the moving sculpture, 'Deposition of the Cross'. He beautified the walls and roofs of churches with sculptures of Eve, Sbyls, and Prophets. The sculpture—'Day and Night'[8] like the other sculpture—'Evening and Dawn' combine in them artistic beauty with deep philosophical ideas. It has been said that his superhuman and divine paintings and sculptures express 'a genius wild and restless'.[9]

B. Cellini (1500-1572), author of *Persian Conqueror, Salt-Cellar of Francis I* (1543) and *The Nymph of Fontainbleau,* was among the most distinguished of the sixteenth century artists.

The sculptor, Jean Boulogne de Douai (1524-1608), author of *Mercury Taking Flight,*[10] kept up the tradition of Cellini. Bramante d'Urbin (1444-1514) invented the 'rhythmic Bay (Triforium)' that separated the pilasters in an irregular manner. Sangallo and Pandolfini invented the 'chain of angles'[11] and the 'moulded head-bands'[12] in the frontons that enhanced the artistic beauty in the churches and buildings of the sixteenth century so considerably.

In northern Italy in general, and in Verona in particular, under the guidance of the architect Sammicheli (1525-1550) the artistic device of executing columns in stages in the facade of the building was tried with success. In Venice Andrea Palladio (1518-1580) popularized the motif of the 'relapsing arcade'[13] of a small order enclosed within a big order.[14]

In painting, Italy made considerable progress in the sixteenth century. Carpaccio (1455-1526) painted legendary themes and processions. But a more celebrated painter was Giovanni Bellini (1430-1516). Tiziano Vecelli, called 'The Titien' was one of the most noted painters of his time. His *Storm* and *The Courtesan* are regarded as masterpieces. His *Rural Concert* at present in the Louvre and *Recumbent Venus* at present in Dresden are noted for great feelings that they depict. The voluptuous paintings of Antonio Allegri da Correggio (1489 ? 1494 ?—1534) are retained by the modern age and his *Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine, Nativity, Madonna,* and *St. George* (Dresden), and other masterpieces have made great contribution in the domain of art and culture. It has been truly said that in him is perhaps best expressed 'the indulgent sensuality of Italian and Catholic Renaissance'.

Among the non-Italian artists of sixteenth century Renaissance, Engelbrechtsen and Lucas de Leyde were known for their familiar and comic scenes. They belonged to the Dutch School which was inspired by the celebrated German artist Hans Holbein the Junior (1497-1543), who settled in England in 1530 and enjoyed the patronage of Henry VIII for whom he painted the famous *Dance of Death* (also known as *Image of Death*), and other masterpieces. His portraits of Erasmus, Jane Seymore, Richard Southwell, Christine of Denmark, and Henry VIII, are well known.

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[7] 'avec fureur et amour'.

[8] executed for Clement VII.

[9] 'une âme farouche et inquiète'.

[10] Mercure Prennant son Vol.

[11] Charnes d'Angle.

[12] les Bandeaux Moulures.

[13] l'Arcade Retombant.

[14] that is, a sort of double arch or arcade ('un petit Ordre et encadree d'un grand Ordre').

At the same time Lucas Cranach (1472-1553) founded the Saxon School. Friend of Luther and his wife whose portraits he made, he was interested in creating a true Saxon, that is, non-Italian art. His nudes, and the mythological composition and visage of his paintings and portraits interest us because of their rustic beauty. This German tradition was continued in Alsace by Hans Baldung Grien (1484 ?-1545).

In architecture the French made rapid strides, and the reason for it was a keen desire to surpass the Italians. The aisle of Louis XII (1503) is noted for its white stone angles, its square panels of red bricks, and its roof of blue slate. In 1531 Dominique de Cortone gave the plan of Hotel de Ville. Seb. Serlio, theorist of classical architecture, came to Fontainebleau in 1541 and built the Hotel de Grand Ferrare (1544-46) and the Chateau d'Ancy-le-Franc (1546), and instructed Philibert Delorme and Pierre Lescot in classical models, especially in regard to constructing the 'facade'. Pierre Lescot (1515-78) was commissioned to reconstruct the Luovre in 1546. Innumerable other artists and architects developed the French artistic tradition so much that at the conclusion of the reign of Henry II (1547-1559) the celebrated architect, Du Cerceau, was able to report to him: 'There shall no more be the need to have recourse to foreigners',[15] that is, in matters of architecture. His contemporaries like Pierre Bontemps, who was the sculptor of the tomb of Francis I at St. Denis, Rigier Richier, sculptor of the sepulchre of St. Mihiel (1560), and Germain Pilon, the author of *The Three Graces* (1561), were all celebrities of the age. Even the foreigners admired the progress achieved in France, and the Italian Vasari frankly admitted Fontainebleau as 'a new Rome'.

Renaissance also progressed well in the Iberian peninsula. The Royal Chapel of Grenada (1506-17) 'permits an ornamentation' which shows 'a rare imagination'. The influence of the Italian Renaissance was perceived first in the tomb of the Infanta Don Juan at Avil in 1507. In Aragon, artists like D. Fancelli, Fiorentino, and Moreto introduced the Renaissance. The brothers Indaco at Granada and Murcia, Paolo de San Leocado at Valencia, and Ferrando were influenced in the art tradition of Leonardo da Vinci. Alonso, after returning from Italian apprenticeship, established the typical Spanish marble tomb-building tradition.

In Russia Ivan III the Great gave impetus to modernization in 1472. In the sixteenth century wooden churches and Byzantine cupola were replaced by stone construction and pyramid roof. The pyramid construction of Kolomenskoie of 1532 served as model to other buildings. Two Russian architects, Barma and Postnik, built the pyramid-type construction for Vassili in the period 1555 to 1560. Ivan III (1462-1505) encouraged foreigners, particularly the Italians such as, Fioravanti and Ruffo, to come to Russia.[16] Fedorov brought the first printed book in Moscow in 1564. People began to hate old manners and began a search for luxuries.[17]

In Prague Vladislas II Jagellon (1471-1516), the Habsbourg, Ferdinand I (1526-1564), and Rodolphe II (1576-1612) were great patrons of Renaissance art. Rodolphe's Gallery of Fine Art was a celebrated museum of those days. Buonacorsi the royal instructor introduced Italian influence in Prague. Sigismond the Great[18] (1506-48) embellished the Cathedral of Wawel and reconstructed some old buildings by the Italian master artist Francesco Della Lora. After 1550 a Polish artist, Gabriel Slonski, decorated many buildings and particularly their portals.

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[15] 'Il ne sera plus besoin d'avoir recours aux ètrangers'.

[16] Pascal, Prof. Pierre *Histoire de la Russie* (1949), p. 50.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 50, 'On meprise les vieilles moeurs, on cherche le luxe'.

Thus we find that in the sixteenth century the Renaissance was fully established throughout the length and breadth of Europe, and transformed the entire life of the people. It was a movement for all-round progress. But there was one drawback, namely 'The Renaissance separated the *elite* from the people (masses)'.[19] Moreover, too quick and complete progress was not liked in certain quarters. So in Italy, the country of its origin, the press was put under the censorship of the Holy Office, and in 1559 a considerable number of printers were affected by strict governmental orders against publishing books. A large number of books were burnt.[20] They had to be burnt under the circumstances. But the Renaissance was an accomplished fact in spite of such obstacles, and nothing could halt its progress.

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[18] Faure, Prof. Paul *Op.cit.* p. 98. He married an Italian lady, one Sforza.

[19] d'Harcourt, Genevieve. *La Vie au Moyen Age* (1957) p. 65.

[20] Bourgin, Georges, *Histoire de l'Italie*, p. 67.

PRAYER AND JAPA

By Sri C. C. Chatterji

Prayer, as commonly practised, is a form of petition, submitted to a divine being, for whom there may or may not be any love or reverence, requesting Him to fulfil our wishes, to grant our desires, to remove our wants, to relieve us of our ills and worries, so that our will be done and not as the Christian prayer says 'Thy will be done'. But this is only a passing phase. Prayers, even for the sake of the lower self, if persisted in with faith and sincerity, may become a kind of discipline, which in time transforms and sublimates the interest in the many things prayed for to the worship of the deity prayed to. The base metal changes into a noble one.

But prayer is still not free from a touch of the ego that craves for the fruit of all actions, though it is no longer offered with an eye to the reward that it is expected to bring. That a man can say his prayers day by day gives him hope that health and wealth, peace and happiness will follow of course, without his specifically asking for them. His self has receded to the background, and he brings his offering to the feet of God, who he knows is the giver of all gifts.

Thus he gradually learns how to eliminate the basic motives of his earlier prayers and gains the experience of awakening to the dawning light of Divine presence. His prayers are now expressions of devotion to his God, repeating His holy names, recounting His goodness and love, mercy and benevolence, above all, seeking the shelter of His blessings. Prayer is now the soul's approach to God, His adoration, a *yoga* or a method of re-integration. Saying his prayers inwardly, man finds that the restless monkey in him has been quietly laid asleep, and in the stillness of his body and mind he passes into a state of meditation and perhaps has a taste of serene contemplation.

Attainment of the contemplative condition being the immediate end of prayer, it is no longer used as a petition or a mascot but as a means of achieving an integral personality through an inner harmony of body, mind, and spirit; whereas the ultimate end is attainment of the unitive *Jñāna* of Brahman, to become one with Him, for 'Brahman he becomes who knows Brahman'.

But the process of establishing the individual soul's unity with the all-pervading Spirit is an exacting one. An Upaniṣad says that it is like walking on a razor's edge, which is sharp and difficult to tread; it is a path beset with dangers. Unless a man dies to his lower self and gains one-pointedness of will and thought, or learns how to concentrate his mind on the object of his prayer, passionately focussing his whole soul on it, he cannot reach the desired goal. Those who are in the know concur in saying that prayer must now be reduced to the repetition of some simple expression, signifying God, so that it leads to concentration, contemplation, and *samādhi*. The unknown author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* writes: 'And if thou desirest to have this intent (of praying) lopped and folded in one word, so that thou mayest have better hold thereupon, take thee but a little word of one syllable, for so it is better than two; for the shorter the word, the better it accordeth with the work of the spirit. And such a word is this word God or this word Love. Choose whichever thou wilt or another; whatever word thou likest of one syllable. And fasten this word to thy heart that so it may never go thence for anything that befalleth. ... This word shall be thy shield and thy spear, whether thou ridest on peace or on war'.

Many men choose the monosyllabic word of deep significance, *Om*, for the 'sacramental act' of *japa*. Others prefer one-word *mantra*, more congenial to their constitution, given them by their spiritual *guru*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* that the word *'Om'* is Brahman. Now, Brahman has two aspects, *sākāra* and *nirākāra*, one with form and the other without form. *Om* is, therefore, the acoustic image of both the aspects of Brahman, just as an idol is the image of a deity. Maharṣi Patañjali in his *'Yoga-Darśana'* mentions that *Om* is the name of *Īśvara*. He prescribes that it should be used for the purpose of *japa*, and at the same time its meaning, that is the named, must be contemplated. Through meditation and constant repetition of the sacred word, the mind becomes profoundly calm and assumes the form of the object indicated by the word. Aldous Huxley finely expresses what happens then: 'The fact for which the word stands will end by presenting itself to the soul in the form of an integral intuition.' Meditation, meditator, and the object meditated upon become one; this identity of the triple is beyond communication.

It is a fact that prayer in the form of *japa* works wonders. Swami Pratyagatmananda Saraswati, in his recently published encyclopaedic work, *Japa-Sūtram*, has described various kinds of *japa* along with the *mantras* used and the results obtainable therefrom. One *mantra* dispels the dread of death; another removes the weakness of old age; yet another is able to cut even the Gordian knot of life and death. Again, there is one *mantra*, called *sārameya*, which puts the *sādhaka* beyond all obstacles; another called *saurabheya*, fulfils his heart's desire and bathes him in light and joy. *Japa* has been given various other names as its vibrations pass through *iḍā*, *piṅgalā*, and *suṣumṅā*. It is now a yogic process. As they take the path of *Suṣumṅā*, and pass from one plexus to another, it acquires more and more purity and prowess till they merge in *Om*. In the final stage it is called *Brahma Japa*; the *sādhaka* now approaches realization. A mellow light surrounds him. He breathes the air of heaven. The dawn of *Pratibha Jñāna* (rising wisdom) inherent in every soul illumines his heart as it appears with the fulfilment of the purpose of *japa*. So says Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*: 'In this world, there is nothing sacred like *Jñāna*; he who has attained success in *Yoga*, realizes it in his own self in course of time.'

But *japa* is not merely the repetition of a *mantra*; it is a form of *yajña* (sacrifice)—rather, amongst all kinds of *yajña*, it is the highest. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that he himself personifies *japa yajña*.

In *japa yajña* the practiser of *japa* is to think of his body as the *yajña*-altar, not made of blood, bone, and flesh but charged with *mantra*; and *nyāsa* as sacrificial fuel on the altar. He is to produce sacrificial fire with the help of *prāṇāyāma* and ignite the fuel. Then begins the work of inward *yajña*—mental prayer, worship, meditation, etc. By this means proper things of offering are thrown into the fire; and then the fire mingles with the splendour of the well-known supernal light (*varaṇīyam bhargaḥ*).

When *japa* has been performed for some time at this stage with patience and perseverance and the *sādhaka's* labours are crowned with success, certain extraordinary experiences follow. Four restless factors in the *sādhaka* become well regulated and calm: (1) speech, (2) breath, (3) sight, and (4) mind. On the other hand four inactive factors are brought into action: (1) The Somnolent Serpent (*Kuṇḍalinī*) is awakened—the awakening of which, according to Swami Vivekananda, is the motive of all *sādhanā*; (2) the silent sound (*Anāhata śabda, Nāda*) begins to be audible in the right ear; (3) the invisible light (*jyoti*) which shines beyond all darkness is seen in flashes from the forehead, and (4) the inaccessible bliss (*rasa*) suffuses the whole being.

Now, these are high flights on the wings of *japa* and prayer in the rarefied atmosphere of austere *sādhanā*. But Sri Ramakrishna has simplified the whole process of performing *japa*, just as he has simplified the profound thoughts of Veda and Vedānta in the plain language of unsophisticated people. Assuming that the aim and end of *japa* is to obtain a glimpse of God, he advises in direct terms: 'Call on Him in solitude. Pray, weep in the anguish of your heart and say, "Allow me to see You". Go to a solitary place. Without solitude the mind cannot become quiet. Have a place for meditation a quarter mile from the house. In solitude, in secret, repetition of His name brings His mercy, and shortly after follows His *darśana*.'

In these words of Paramahaṁsa Deva, one may be inclined to read a short and simple commentary on what Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā*: 'The *yogin* should constantly practise concentration of the heart, retiring into solitude, alone, with the mind and body subdued, and free from hope and possession.'

This is a comprehensive *śloka*. It gives in detail all that a man has to do in order to adopt the life of a *yogin*. As a preparation for the life, it advises control of body and mind and the forsaking of all hopes and desires of possession. Next, he is to retire to a solitary place all by himself. Then he is to apply his mind constantly to meditation. Prayer can be made more effective if associated with actions. To love and serve others selflessly is also, prayer as poet Coleridge beautifully says:

> He prayeth well, who loveth well
> Both man and bird and beast.
> He prayeth best, who loveth best
> All things both great and small.
> For the dear God who loveth us,
> He made and loveth all.

Prayer is a way of life to him who puts this method into practice—loves all creatures in the name of God. He has two qualities *par excellence*—on the one hand he is devoted to 'doing good to all living beings', on the other he has 'no enmity with anyone in the world'. A man of this nature has the Lord's assurance of union with Him. His prayers, sowing the seed for others' good, reaps a golden harvest for himself.

'SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: A FORGOTTEN CHAPTER OF HIS LIFE'

[A REVIEW]

By A Reader

The above is the title of a new book* written by Pandit Beni Shankar Sharma and presented to the public with an attractive get-up. The book contains a short foreword by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and an appreciative preface by Swami Sambuddhananda. Pandit Beni Shankar is to be congratulated for this valuable publication during Swamiji's birth centenary celebrations when public eagerness to know more about this illustrious son of India is almost limitless.

All, however, may not agree that the book brings to light really 'a forgotten chapter' of Swamiji's life, for the very intimate relationship between Swamiji and Maharaja Ajit Singhji of Khetri, which is the theme of the book, was never actually forgotten in the real sense of the term. Nevertheless, the book highlights some of the already known facts, presents new ones, and revaluates many of them from a fresh angle of vision. At the same time, the book also raises some very important questions which, perhaps unwittingly, the author leaves unanswered. The reason might have been that he preoccupied himself with presenting the Khetri case in so bold a relief that he had no time to spend over allied issues. It might be again owing to this anxiety that certain inaccuracies have also crept in. His mental background, being as it is as stated by us, the criticism levelled by Pandit Sharma against Swamiji's earlier biographers is understandable, but it does not seem to be fully justified. In fact, some of the theories put forward, or inferences made on the basis of stray remarks, seem to be rather far fetched. In brief, the book is a valuable addition to the Vivekananda literature, but at the same time it raises several points of controversy. Hence we present hereunder our views on some of them.

The role of Khetri in Swamiji's life is the main topic of this monograph as is clearly admitted by the author himself: 'I began feeling a sort of irresistible urge in me for making an exhaustive and critical study of the Swami's activities at Khetri and the contribution of Khetri to his great missionary cause. It always pained me to see that Maharaja Ajit Singh who played not an insignificant part in the life of the Swami was not found anywhere in his true role' (Introduction). That is one of the starting points. The other is that 'the biography so published (meaning the biography written by Swamiji's Eastern and Western disciples) could not be regarded even then as thorough, complete, or correct' (p. 3). No reader of this oldest and authentic biography of Swamiji will claim that it is *absolutely correct to the minutest detail,* and yet no reader will challenge it in its broad outlines. But we may ask: 'Does that justify the above sweeping remark by our present author?' Let us see how far he exposes the errors of the old biographers and at the same time how far he himself adheres to truth and nothing but truth.

We shall take Swamiji's name itself for our first consideration. The generally accepted view is that Swamiji changed his name quite frequently to hide his identity, and that he got his world-famous name, Vivekananda, at the Khetri durbar on the eve of his departure for the West. Now from the account given in this book it would appear that Swamiji got this name during his first meeting with the Khetri Maharaja. In support of this, the author quotes Pandit Jhabarmal's testimony (p. 56) and the Khetri State Waquyat Register, the evidence of which latter is vitiated by the admission that 'in fact, originally the Swami was mentioned in the draft copy of the Register *only* as a sannyasin, and this was, at a later date, (i.e. when fair-copied after several months or even years) changed into Swami Vivekananda' (p. 52). And, Pandit Jhabarmal's testimony is compromised by the author's remarks: 'Vivekananda, a name which he, in fact, assumed only later on', (i.e. later than the first entries in the Register—*ibid.*). According to Sri Jhabarmal, Swamiji used his name 'from that day (i.e. middle of 1891) onward' (p. 56), and Pandit Sharma also remarks that Swamiji 'opted the new name never to drop it'. The author also quotes Romain Rolland, according to whom Colonel Olcott knew Swamiji as Sachchidananda in 1893 (p. 58). So when was the new name assumed and when did it become permanent? The author makes no attempt at reconciliation, for this is impossible according to his theory, whereas everything becomes logical by accepting the view of the old biography that the name Vivekananda was assumed by him at the last stage, a few days before sailing for America.

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* Published by Messrs. Oxford Book & Stationery Co., 17 Park Street, Calcutta 16. (Pages 232) Price Rs. 10.

Let us now turn to the question of monetary help. Who paid for Swamiji's passage and who maintained him in the U.S.A. during the pre-Parliament days? We are ready to concede that the Khetri Maharaja played here a very important role, perhaps more important than what is expressed, hinted at, or assumed in the old biographies. But this admission may not satisfy our present author, who would have almost the whole credit for Khetri. Writes he: 'Whereas the biographers state that it was in Madras that the Swami was supplied with the funds by his friends and devotees, who came from the middle classes, wherewith he went to America, Dr. (Bhupendra Nath) Dutta includes "some liberal ruling princes" as well, who arranged for his departure for the West. ... he also missed the issue altogether and was not justified in giving "all honour" to the "liberal princes," and the liberal *bourgeoisie* of Madras, dividing it between them equally. ... there were not "some liberal princes", as I shall presently show, but only the Prince. ... the honour belongs to and should go to Maharaja Ajit Singh' (pp. 67-68). Without entering into the details of this controversy we can clinch the matter by quoting directly from a letter of Swamiji, dated May 1893, written from Khetri to Sri Haridas Viharidas Desai, Dewan of Junagad, and published by the Dewan's relatives in a booklet, from which the *Complete Works* of Swami Vivekananda, Vol. VIII, reproduces it on pp. 294-95: 'When at Madras, the people there of their own accord in conjunction with H. H. of Mysore and Ramnad made every arrangement to send me up ...'. The reader may note the names of two princes and the clause, 'made every arrangement'. Swamiji writes further: 'And you may also remember that between H. H. of Khetri and myself there are the closest ties of love. Well, I, as a matter of course, wrote to him that I was going to America.' Pandit Sharma writes later on that the Khetri Maharaja came to know of Swamiji's plans from a chance letter from the latter's brother. Swamiji's categorical statement, however, is otherwise. It is also clear from this that Ajit Singhji did not pay any money up till then, although he was apprised of Swamiji's move by Swamiji himself. And again let us take note of the eloquent tribute paid to Ramnad by Swamiji at Pamban: 'It is impossible for me to express my gratitude to H. H. the Raja of Ramnad for his love towards me. If any good work has been done by me and through me, India owes much to this good man, for it was he who conceived the idea of my going to Chicago, and it was he who put the idea into my head and persistently urged me on to accomplish it' (*Complete Works*, Vol. III, pp. 139-40).

Pandit Sharma makes much of the fact that the steamer ticket was handed over to Swamiji by Munshi Jagmohanlal, the private secretary to Khetri Maharaja, hinting thereby that *all* the passage money came from Khetri. He also talks of the Circular Notes mentioned in a letter of the Maharaja, thereby suggesting that *all* the other expenses, too, came from that source only. We are constrained to conclude that the passage was booked much earlier, and *not* after the return from Khetri. Our reasons are that P. & O. seats were greatly in demand in those days, and one could not get a berth at short notice, and secondly that Swamiji was at Bombay at the house of Sri K. Ghose (a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna) just before he proceeded to Khetri. There he was met by two of his brother disciples and all of them, including the Munshi, travelled together to Abu Road station, where the brother-disciples separated. This earlier stay at Bombay was certainly meant for making the necessary arrangements for Swamiji's voyage. We are not chary of giving adequate credit to Khetri, but we cannot belittle others. Swamiji and his friends did not know much of the technicalities of booking passage etc.; and Munshi Jagmohanlal and the Khetri Agent at Bombay must have played an important part in this matter, including the conversion of cash to Circular Notes. Such help Swamiji took at other times also, for instance, when asking Swami Saradananda to proceed to England with money paid by Mr. Sturdy, he directed the latter to take the help of the Khetri Agent.

Pandit Sharma also refers to the durbar held at Khetri to thank Swamiji and the American public for the work done there. But this durbar was rather a belated one, for the Madras and Calcutta public meetings were held much earlier for the very same purpose.

On the basis of some letters addressed to Khetri, it is inferred by the author that Khetri became at a time the 'unofficial headquarters' of the Ramakrishna organization. Pandit Sharma's assumption is unreasonable. Alasinga Perumal's house, or the Junagad Dewan's residence, or Hale's quarters could equally, and more reasonably, claim that distinction. Belur Math might not have come into existence in 1893-97, but Alambazar Math was there, to be sure!

We shall now point out some more inaccuracies:

Swami Akhandananda is spoken of as 'the foremost *gurubhāi* and follower of Swami Vivekananda'. Frankly speaking, we fail to understand the import or relevancy of these epithets, which are introduced for proving the truth of Pandit Jhabarmal's theory that the name Vivekananda was assumed in 1891. Swami Akhandananda was *not* at Khetri in 1891.

Page 53 opens with the remark: 'Swami Vivekananda's association with Khetri was a landmark and a turning point in his life in more ways than one.' The Khetri Maharaja gave substantial monetary help to Swamiji himself and to his mother and brothers in Calcutta. The followers of Swamiji are grateful to Pandit Sharma for emphasizing this fact. But how could this be a 'turning point' in Swamiji's life? Kanyakumari or Madras, may claim to be so in a greater way. The incident about the nautch-girl has been exaggerated too much. Was Swamiji really 'transformed into a knower of Brahman' then and there alone, and not earlier? What about his illumination at Dakshineshwar and again at Cossipore, and his realization of the cosmic Self under a tree on the way to Almora?

Page 59 mentions that Swamiji was advised to wear a turban and taught how to do it by the Khetri Maharaja. Let that be so if it was a fact. We notice, however, that Swamiji's turban differs from the Rajputana ones. Bengal and Gujarat dignitories also in those days used turbans. The funniest assertion, however, is that the Ramakrishna brotherhood has adopted that turban 'as part of their distinctive dress'. The monks of the Ramakrishna Order do not wear turban. Pandit Sharma is also wrong in stating that the Mission has adopted the Rajputana style of sitting during meals.

Page 67 makes this assertion: 'It was not in Madras that the Swami secured the funds with which he was enabled to go to America, but it was in Khetri. . . .' We have already dealt with this topic. Besides, on p. 93 we have Pandit Sharma's admission that Swamiji received at Bombay from Alasinga Perumal £170 in Notes and £9 in cash. These Notes must have been the Circular Notes mentioned earlier, and they came from Alasinga Perumal. The terrible anxiety referred to in the portion of the letter quoted on p. 92 does not prove that Khetri paid all the money; it may rather refer to the anxiety about Swamiji's mother whom the Maharaja began to help after Swamiji's visit to Khetri, on the eve of his departure for the West. Up till then Pandit Sharma has not adduced any proof to show that Khetri gave any financial help, though such a promise was communicated to Munshi Jagmohanlal by a letter which the Munshi received on his way back to Khetri probably after the reservation of berth had already been arranged for at Bombay (p. 72 top and p. 82 top). The letter quoted on p. 92 is printed again in full on pp. 173-75 in its proper context, from which it appears that Swamiji was talking of his family. The book fully establishes the princely help rendered by the Maharaja to Swamiji and his mother personally; but we are concerned here with the part played by others for making the American venture successful, who should not be pushed aside just because of certain subsequent events, however resounding they may be. It is quite likely that the Madras friends could provide a lower class ticket, whereas the Khetri Maharaja converted it into first class, paying the extra amount.

On p. 77 we read: 'The Swami was equipped on a grand scale with everything he might require.' He was *not;* he had no warm clothing. By the way, we may remind here that up till then the Swami had been depending on his Madras friends, and that is why from America he wrote to Alasinga and not to Khetri when he was facing monetary difficulty in the pre-Parliament days.

On p. 6 we find a contradiction. The author writes first that, at Swamiji's suggestion, many letters were sent to Belur Math, and he hints that some of these had been lost there. But a little later he says again that some letters at least were not sent and had been discovered at Khetri though Swamiji really wanted 'all the letters' (p. 4).

Moreover, most of the letters of Swamiji presented in the book and considered by Pandit Sharma as 'hitherto unpublished' have actually been published long ago. The letter of Sri Bhupendranath Dutta reproduced on p. 200 does not give the whereabouts of Swamiji as the author seems to hold. In fact it tells about his immediate elder brother Sri Mahendra Nath Dutta. Again, the author has worked under wrong informations when he claims that the letter of Swami Rama Tirtha found by him is 'the only evidence' to prove that Swami Rama had met Swami Vivekananda. He says: 'There was no evidence on record till now that they had ever met and exchanged notes' (appendix). This is factually wrong. For, apart from the *Life of Swami Vivekananda,* the biographies of Swami Rama Tirtha, especially the one entitled *The Story of Swami Rama* by Puran Singh, published in 1924 by Ganesh & Co. Madras, elaborately describe the meeting of these two eminent persons at Lahore.

This write-up has become rather long, and so we shall conclude by pointing out a few spelling mistakes: Bodhya-Gaya (p. 60), Examplified (p. 62), Distric Judge (63), etc.

In spite of all these, we must tell the readers in all honesty that the book is worth its price and, though we disagree on important issues, the book reveals facts which are valuable in understanding Swamiji more.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

In this issue, Dr. R. Balasubrahmanian, M.A., Ph.D., of the Annamalai University concludes his learned article, which started appearing from our October issue. After some more examination of Maṇḍana's theory about *karma,* Dr. Balasubrahmanian concludes by saying that Maṇḍana 'is one of the earliest philosophers to suggest a synthesis of contemplation and *karma* through a synoptic vision'.

Professor K. P. S. Choudhury, M.A., B.L., is the Head of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology in A.P.S.M. College, Barauni. In his article in this issue, he tries to explain the real significance of the statement 'He Is a Living God and God of the Living'. This article will be found illuminating particularly in this month which is dear to the followers of the Bible.

Professor A. N. Whitehead is one of the most important contemporary philosophers. Dr. B. V. Kishan, M.A., Ph.D., of the Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, deals in his learned article with Prof. Whitehead's conception of education. He says that, according to Whitehead, education must offer 'the fullest possible development of the individual' and that it must recognize 'that human beings are capable of genuine devotion to truth, beauty and goodness.'

Mrs. Courtenaye Olden is an American devotee connected with the Vedanta Society of New York. Her article in this issue is the report of a talk she gave at the birth centenary celebration of Swami Vivekananda held sometime back in New York.

The learned and informative article about the 'European Renaissance in the Sixteenth Century' is from the pen of Dr. Paresh Nath Mukherjee, M.A., Ph.D., of the D.A.V. College, Dehra Dun. Dr. Mukherjee, basing as usual his study on several authentic sources, tells about the actions and reactions that the Renaissance brought about in European culture and society of the time and how its after effects continue even to the present day.

'Prayer and Japa' is a contribution from Sri C. C. Chatterji, M.A., of Bombay. In this article, he has dealt with the different kinds of *japa* and prayer and says that they are very effective means for one's spiritual progress.

Pandit Beni Shankar Sharma, B.L., the author of *Swami Vivekananda : A Forgotten Chapter of His Life,* is a practising advocate at Calcutta and belongs to the erstwhile state of Khetri in Rajputana. During his childhood days, he had heard many stories about Swami Vivekananda's visits to Khetri from his father, who had the proud privilege of attending on the Swami during his first visit there in 1891. Recently Pandit Sharma had occasion to come across some state records which gave more particulars regarding Swamiji's contact with Khetri and its Maharaja. Based on these records Pandit Sharma has written the book. The write-up on it by 'A Reader' is a careful examination of its claims and assertions.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING. By E. J. ORTMAN. *Published by Philosophical Library Inc. 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, U.S.A. 1962. Pages 382. Price $ 4.75.*

Teaching is ordinarily regarded an art or skill and to attribute a philosophy to it may sound rather queer to many. Generally, it is education which is supposed to have claim on a philosophy of its own. In the present book, however, the author has, by his masterly and subtle treatment of the subject, brought teaching so close to education itself that one can be easily identified with the other in its ultimate analysis. The book thus convinces the reader that teaching can and should be invested with a philosophy so as to enable it to rise to a position of joyful performance.

The author is an American educationist with a wide and rich experience of pedagogy right from the kindergarten to conducting research at university stage. Naturally, what he has written is with an American background of varied experiments and achievements in the field of education. To readers in India, where right educational efforts and attainments are far, far behind, the book at first may be a difficult reading both in respect of its thought and expression; but, given proper interest and attention, it will no doubt reflect clearly in the readers the wonderful insight of the author into the difficult subject of teaching.

Teaching for personality is, perhaps, the last word as yet in Western, particularly American, educational thought and the book is a fine endeavour to establish it. In the author's opinion, and rightly so, to teach for an integrated personality, we are to take into account not only life's psycho-physical implications, i.e. anatomy, cerebro-spinal structure, autonomic nervous system plus mind and spirit, but something more also. That something more is the cosmic consciousness of the Being which though not yet scientifically acceptable, may soon emerge still another essential life-property just like body, mind, and spirit. By hinting at this new property, the author has no doubt, visualized a probability which will bring modern educational thought very near to the Vedāntic conception of the universality of soul.

In our country where education, unlike in America, is for the present geared to meet the demands of the industrial revolution aiming at economic emancipation, this kind of teaching for personality may sound too ambitious and idealistic. All the same, let us not forget that a stage shall come here also when the present exigency will have little significance and we, too, as a full-fledged democracy shall have to resort to teaching for personality. It will, therefore, be wise on our part to go on gradually reorientating our theories and practices of teaching to the one end—the shaping of integrated personalities.

The book deserves serious study by educationists, particularly teachers. It is sure to provide a thought-provoking incentive in them, so that they may elevate teaching to a refreshing, joyful, and productive activity. The notes and index at the end enrich the book.

Sri P. R. Bhatt

THE LAW AND THE LAWYERS. By Mahatma Gandhi. Compiled and Edited by S. B. Kher. *Published by Navajivan House, Ahmedabad. 1962. Pages 246. Price Rs. 3.*

Gandhiji spent more than twenty years of his long life as a practising barrister, and during these days, he almost spiritualized this legal profession. So it is quite in the fitness of things that there should be a book like the one under review, which could adequately throw light on this facet of his life for the enlightenment of the readers, both lay as well as legal.

The book is compiled with the materials culled up mostly from the writings of Gandhiji (from his Autobiography and journals like *Young India, Harijan,* etc.) and has been divided into five Parts. Parts I and II deal with Gandhiji as a lawyer in the making and as a full fledged practising lawyer. Part III contains five memorable cases in which Gandhiji was directly involved. Part IV discusses the role of lawyers in the Satyagraha struggle, and Part V contains his views on miscellaneous topics pertinent to the theme of the book. Besides these, the editor has provided it with an introduction and index to make the book more valuable.

While some of the Mahatma's writings contained in this book may have worn out their importance due to the passage of time, what still remains fresh and scintillating is his sterling advice to the present-day lawyers. Really, this sacred profession has been very much desecrated by very many unscrupulous persons who, being in it, have actually alienated truth and honesty from it and have made it subservient to the interest of their purse. The book highlights his firm conviction that 'the vocation of the lawyers is in no way inconsistent with the pursuit of truth' and that a true lawyer is one who places 'truth and service in the first place and the emoluments of the profession in the next place only'.

The book, however, suffers from some glaring defects. Having been compiled with materials taken from different sources, it gives a disjointed narration. Further, the writings which serve the main purpose of the book (that is, according to the editor, to inspire the readers with the belief that the vocation of the lawyer is in no way inconsistent with the pursuit of truth etc.), could not be brought into relief, and have rather been over-shadowed by other articles, some of which even seem extraneous and fit ill with the main idea behind the book. On the whole, it is a book worth reading and preserving.

Sri Prabhat Kumar Banerjee

HINDI

HAMĀRĀ ĀHĀR. (A Hindi Edition of *Our Food*). By Dr. H. C. Srivastava, Dr. Swaminathan of the Central Food Research Institute, Mysore, and Dr. Bhagwan. *Published by Ganesh & Co. (Private) Ltd., Madras 17. 1962. Pages 140. Price Rs. 2.*

It is a praiseworthy attempt on the part of its authors to popularize this vital knowledge, and they have offered us so much information in such a small and popular-level book. Useful charts have been appended, which adds to the importance of the book. I wish that the authors bring out another edition alongside this which may contain less of charts, less of technical words and descriptions, but which may be more interesting to read and remember. This is such a vital subject that we must not only make its knowledge available to the people, but should also make it so interesting that they read it before everything else.

I would recommend to everyone to read this book and to benefit from it by making vegetable milk from ground-nut, by making and using odourless half-boiled rice, by using multipurpose food evolved by the Research Institute, Mysore, and by balancing one's diet.

The book carries a preface by Sri C. B. Gupta, the then Chief Minister of U.P. If a Chief Minister can take more interest in the popularization of knowledge about food and in the changing of our food habits on the lines suggested in the book, he can do much more. The various innovations discovered by the Central Research Institute, Mysore, and described in the book, can be adopted in practice by the people when such substitute food articles can be had cheaply and easily. These may be made compulsory for all licensed hotels and restaurants in the States to cater balanced diet and to consume and cater the food substitutes evolved by the Research Institute, Mysore. Public education campaigns may also be organized. This may be given as much importance as some State Governments are giving to *nīrā* and to palm-gur industry. Nay, all such schemes may be combined, so that public notice may be attracted better and people may take this more seriously.

I would also suggest a change in the syllabuses of the secondary school students. General Science books up to class VIII may be suitably amended to include lessons on balanced diets and substitute foods. A knowledge of these is more important at this stage than a knowledge of the structure of brain or lung or kidney. Experiments of making vegetable milk and of preparing substitute food may be shown in classes. A scheme of preparing vegetable milk centrally in every city and of supplying it to school children out of their refreshment fees at a subsidized rate is worth consideration.

It is a cheap popular edition and a handy and useful book for a common household in India.

Sri Raj Narayan Arya

VIJAYINI. By Srimati Annapurna Thangdi. *Published by Bharatiya Granthamala, Gunga Nawab Park, Lucknow. Pages 196. Price Rs. 4.*

The book under review is a narrative based on the life of Yogin Ma, a lady disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. Born in a fairly well-to-do family, she was the only child of her parents and hence had passed her early days in the midst of joy and affection. She was given in marriage to a rich man with great hopes which, however, were belied as he proved to be too self-willed and reckless. Naturally, she had a very bad time and had to pass through many adverse circumstances and face many difficult situations, including the premature death of her husband, till at last, she came under the benign grace of Sri Ramakrishna and found solace and peace in spiritual life.

The theme of the book, therefore, is undoubtedly very good. But the writer has allowed too much of free play to her imagination and, in order to create situations and show contrast, has introduced many extraneous, and at times undesirable, events and scenes which, having come too much in relief, have pushed the main theme to the background. Even then, the discerning reader will find the book interesting and enjoy a good reading.

Sri Narendra Naithani

YUGĀCĀRYA VIVEKĀNANDA. By Swami Apurvananda. *Published by Sri Ramakrishna Advaita Ashram, Varanasi 1. Pages 108. For Free Distribution.*

To commemorate the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna Advaita Ashram has published the above booklet for free distribution among students. It is a nice little book which tells about the life story of Swami Vivekananda in an interesting way. There are not many Hindi biographies of Swamiji and we hope that this one will prove very helpful to Hindi-knowing people, specially young students, in knowing about Swami Vivekananda and what he did for his motherland and the world. The more such books are published, the more will it be helpful in acquainting our growing generation with Swamiji's ideas and ideals which will stand them in good stead and inspire them with love of their country and its culture.

S. C.

BENGALI

TĪRTHARENU. Edited by Swami Prajnanananda. *Published by Sri Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 19-B Raja Rajkrishna Street, Calcutta. 1962. Pages 332.*

Swami Abhedananda was a great scholar and a distinguished monk of the Ramakrishna Order, and was one of the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. On his return from America, he delivered a series of lectures on the *Gītā*, Upaniṣads, *raja-yoga*, etc. The book under review contains the salient portions of these highly thoughtful discourses.

It is undoubtedly a book of great value to those interested in philosophy and religion. The book is neatly printed; the get-up is attractive.

Dr. Anima Sen Gupta

YUGAPRAVARTAK VIVEKĀNANDA. By Swami Apurvananda. *Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Bankura, West Bengal. Pages 272. Price Rs. 3.*

A number of biographies of Swami Vivekananda is being published in various languages during the year of his birth centenary, and quite a good number of them is in Bengali. The present volume under review is also one such, but definitely with a distinction. The author, who has many beautiful biographical works to his credit, has done perhaps his best in this work, which, within a comparatively short compass, presents the eventful and vast life of Swami Vivekananda very beautifully. The language, the marshalling of facts, the arrangement of sequences, and above all, the depiction of the difficult personality of Swamiji have all been so ably and usefully combined that the reading of the book becomes at once arresting, interesting, and profitable. We have no hesitation in saying that this is one of the best biographies of Swami Vivekananda that have been published so far. The price of the book is also quite within the reach of all. We wish a wide circulation of the book, particularly in this year of Swamiji's birth centenary, so that the general public, specially the younger ones, may get a correct and impressive picture of Swamiji, with only a little effort.

S. C.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SHILLONG

The Centenary was inaugurated on the 5th May 1963, with the chanting of Vedic hymns. In the morning a procession starting from the Ashrama went through the principal streets of the town. On the occasion the Municipal Board renamed the Kelsall Road as Swami Vivekananda Road. In the evening, a public meeting was held at the Ashrama, which was presided over by the Governor of Assam. Swami Ranganathananda and Pranavatmananda spoke on the occasion. In the next day's meeting, Swami Ranganathananda took the chair. Sri R. N. Brahma, Minister, Assam, and Swami Dhyanatmananda gave discourses on Swamiji, after which, Swami Pranavatmananda conducted a lantern-lecture. The 7th May was the 'Ladies Day'. On the 8th, a memorial tablet was unveiled by Swami Dhyanatmananda at Laban to mark Swamiji's visit and stay at Shillong in 1901. Shri Bibhu Bhushan Choudhury revealed in his brief talk some hitherto unknown information about Swamiji. In the evening Ranganathanandaji delivered a lecture on 'Swamiji's Message of the Synthesis of Science and Spirituality', followed by a musical soiree. The 'Children's Day' on the 9th was presided over by Mrs. Halimon Khongphai. The 'Students' Day' was observed on the 11th, when Major General Jang Shamsher Singh took the chair and gave an inspiring address. The last day's function was presided over by Sri Dev Kant Barooah, Minister of Education, Assam.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, ASANSOL

The functions in connection with the centenary began on the 11th April and ended on the 30th April. On the first day a big procession went through the main roads of Asansol. Several Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order as also Sri Kshitish Chandra Chowdhury, the former Vice-Chancellor of the Viswabharati University, Sri Rajendra Nath Mazumdar, the former Mayor of Calcutta Corporation, Sri Dakshina Ranjan Bose, the news editor of *Jugantar*, Sri Saila Kumar Mukherjee, Minister of West Bengal, Prof. Haripada Bharati, Prof. Santwana Das Gupta, Prof. Kamal Chandra Chattopadhyaya and other eminent speakers addressed the meetings held on different days in connection with the celebration. The most attractive feature was the exhibition of the life history of Swamiji through clay models and it drew several thousands of visitors from Asansol and near about places. There were *Bhajana* songs by the radio artists Chabi Bandyopadhyaya, Sukhendu Goswami, Sri Panchanan Mahanti, etc. Sri Sudhir Bandyopadhyaya recited Rāmāyaṇa songs. On the 28th April the Simulia Athletic Club displayed physical feats. On the next day, the boys of the Ashrama school staged the drama 'Swamiji'. On the last day, Swami Shiveswarananda conducted a magic-lantern lecture on the life of Swamiji.

RAMAKRISHNA YOGODYAN, KANKURGACHI, CALCUTTA.

The centenary celebrations were held from the 12th April to the 15th April. There were *bhajanas*, music. Upaniṣad reading, and two meetings in which Swamis Gambhirananda and Niramayananda spoke. There was also a cinema show on Sri Ramakrishna.

ADVAIṬA ASHRAMA, MAYAVATI

In connection with the Centenary celebrations of Swamiji, meetings were organized by the Ashrama at Lohaghat, Champavat, and Pithoragarh in which Dr. Ramdas, Sri Rajendra Kumar, P.E.S., Sri B. N. Pande, I.A.S., and Swamis Chidatmananda and Ekatmananda spoke.

NORTH KARNATAKA

Swamis Adidevananda and Sastrananda visited Chitradurga, Davanagere, Harihar, Ranebennur, Hanumanmatti, Haveri, Hubli, Hulkote, Gadag-Betgeri, Dharwar, Belgaum, and Chikkodi, and addressed 23 meetings.

PUNJAB

The celebrations at the Chandigarh Ramakrishna Ashrama started on the 27th January 1963, and continued till the 8th of February. A short life and some lectures and teachings of Swamiji in Punjabi were published. The Governor unveiled a statue of Swamiji. Besides the schools and colleges of Punjab, the following places also celebrated the centenary: Jullundur, Ferozepore, Pathankot, Ambala, Jind, Faridkot, Nilokheri, Kurukshetra (University), Rohtak, Gurdaspur, Gurgaon, Dharamsala, Simla, etc.

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The local Ramakrishna Seva Sadan celebrated the occasion from the 12th to 17th January 1963. Special issues of the local papers were published and Radio Kashmir broadcasted suitable programmes on the occasion. The Committee has taken up the publication of an Urdu booklet on the life and message of Swami Vivekananda.

AJMER

Dr. Sampurnananda, the Governor of Rajasthan, inaugurated the five-day long celebrations. Symposiums and lectures on the life and teachings of Swamiji were organized in the different colleges. Two important roads, one in Ajmer and the other in Jaipur, have been renamed 'Vivekananda Marg'.

GWALIOR

The centenary was inaugurated on the 17th January 1963 with *pūja, bhajana, kīrtana,* etc. Her Highness the Maharani of Gwalior, M.P., participated in the function. The Municipal Corporation has renamed one of the busiest roads as 'Vivekananda Marg'.

VEDANTA SOCIETY, NEW YORK

On the 17th January 1963, a special worship was held. In the evening a vesper service was performed, accompanied by music. After dinner Swami Pavitrananda discoursed on Swamiji and his works. The public celebration of Swamiji's birthday was held on January 20. Swami Pavitrananda gave a talk on 'Swami Vivekananda: Flaming Spirit of Vedānta'. On April 26, during the 'Members' Dinner', members delivered enlightening speeches on Swamiji's message, recited Swamiji's poem *'Angels Unawares'*, and beautifully sang the hymn on Swamiji beginning with *'Mūrta-maheśvara'*. On June 18, Swami Sarvagatananda, of Boston and Providence, addressed the congregation on 'Swami Vivekananda: His Love for Humanity'. On the 4th of July, the day of Swamiji's *mahāsamādhi*, Swami Pavitrananda and over fifty members drove to a pretty mountain-top at Putnam County and joyously spent the day there reciting Swamiji's poems and reading his lectures.

Next came a drawing from a large 'hat', into which each member present had deposited his or her favourite quotation from Swami Vivekananda. Each quotation drawn was read aloud by the member who had chosen it. This method of studying and understanding Swamiji's teachings was found to be both beneficial and enjoyable to all present.

Swami Pavitrananda has been giving every Tuesday evening a talk on 'Studies in Swami Vivekananda' throughout the centenary year.

WASHINGTON, U.S.A.

The centenary was organized by a committee of local devotees at the Auditorium of the Smithsonian Institution on 4th October 1963, with the co-operation of the Indian Embassy in Washington and the moral and financial support of the Government of India. It was attended by a large number of Indian as well as foreign nationals including some of the senior officials of the U. S. Government, presidents and professors of universities and representatives of different embassies. The programme commenced with the singing of a devotional song and a song on Swami Vivekananda by Mrs. Balasubramanian, accompanied by Mr. K. V. Rao of the University of Maryland on *tabla*. Ambassador B. K. Nehru gave the welcome address. Thereafter Swami Nikhilananda of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, spoke at length on the life and essential teachings of Swami Vivekananda. Dr. Grayson Kirk, President of Columbia University, New York, who was the guest speaker, addressed the gathering and emphasized the importance of Vivekananda's thoughts for the modern world and the need for greater understanding on the international level. The meeting concluded with general remarks and a vote of thanks by Dr. Kurt Leidecker, Professor of Philosophy at the Mary Washington College of the University of Virginia, Fredericksburg.

Dr. S. M. S. Chari, First Secretary (Education), Embassy of India, who was in charge of the centenary celebration, made the opening remarks about the centenary and introduced the speakers.

THE HOLY MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY

The one hundred and eleventh birthday of Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother, falls on Saturday, the 7th December 196

I

REMINISCENCES
OF
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

This book presents together for the first time the memories of thirty admirers, including disciples, of Swami Vivekananda. The articles were previously published in *Prabuddha Bharata* and *Vedanta Kesari*, monthlies of the Ramakrishna order.

Written mostly by persons who were intimately associated with Swamiji, they clearly reveal the intensity of a spiritual life wedded to universal uplift. The impress which his life and character had on those who were about him is discussed from various angles by people who represented different walks of life.

Swami Vivekananda's was a towering personality, rich in mental and spiritual attainments. Says Sister Christine, one of his foremost disciples : "He shares the life of those about him, enters into their joys and sorrows, rejoices with them, mourns with them but through it all he never forgets who he is, whence he came, or what the purpose of his coming. He never forgets his divinity. He remembers that he is the great, the glorious, the majestic Self. He knows that he came from that ineffable supernal region which has no need of the sun or moon, for it is illumined by the Light of lights. He knows that he *was*, long before the time when 'all the sons of God sang together for joy'."

Excellent get-up

Demy 8vo. **Pages 412** **Price : Rs. 7·50**

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Printed and Published by SWAMI ADVAYANANDA on behalf of the Trustees of the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati,
printed at General Printers & Publishers Private Ltd., 119 Dharamtolla Street, Calcutta 13,
and published at Advaita Ashrama, 5 Dehi Entally Road, Calcutta 14
Editor : SWAMI GAMBHIRANANDA, Joint Editor : SWAMI CHIDATMANANDA
Published on 1st January, 1963

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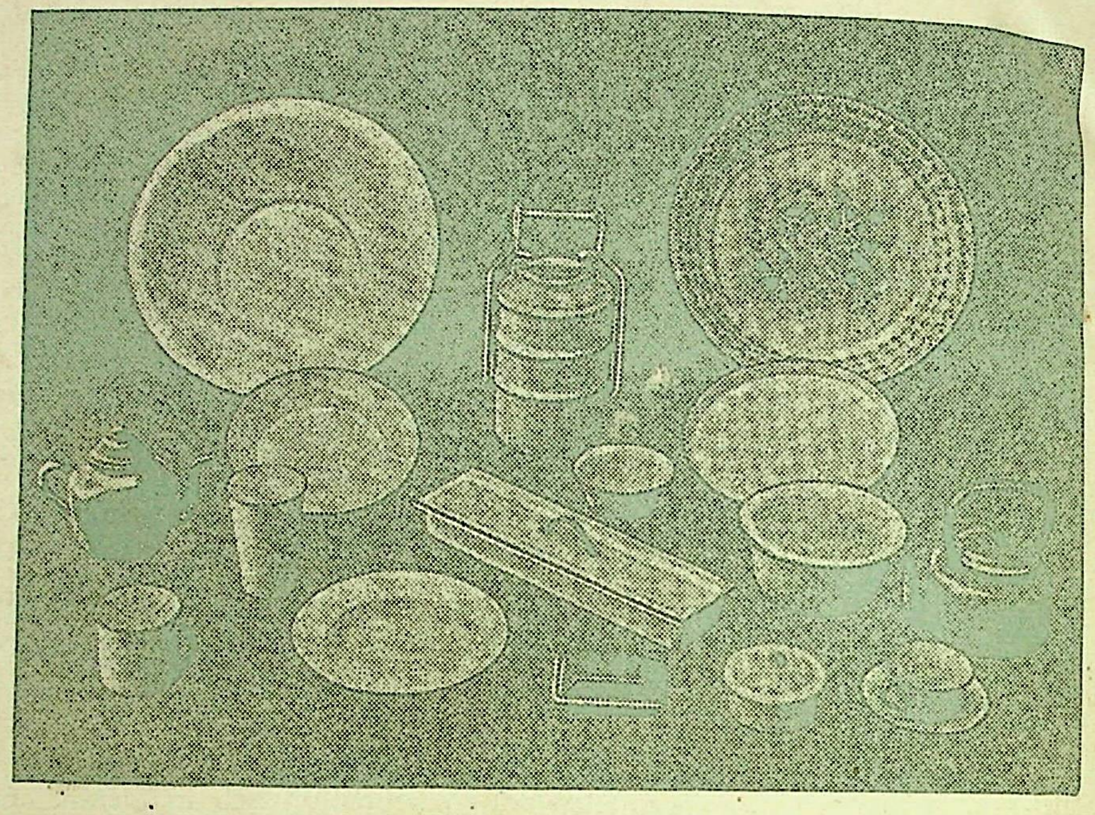

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Annual Subscription : India, Burma and Ceylon - Rupees Five, Foreign - Fourteen Shillings, and U. S. A. - Four Dollars. Single Copy : Inland - Fifty Naye Paise.

Cover Engraved & Printed by Bengal Autotype Co., Calcutta